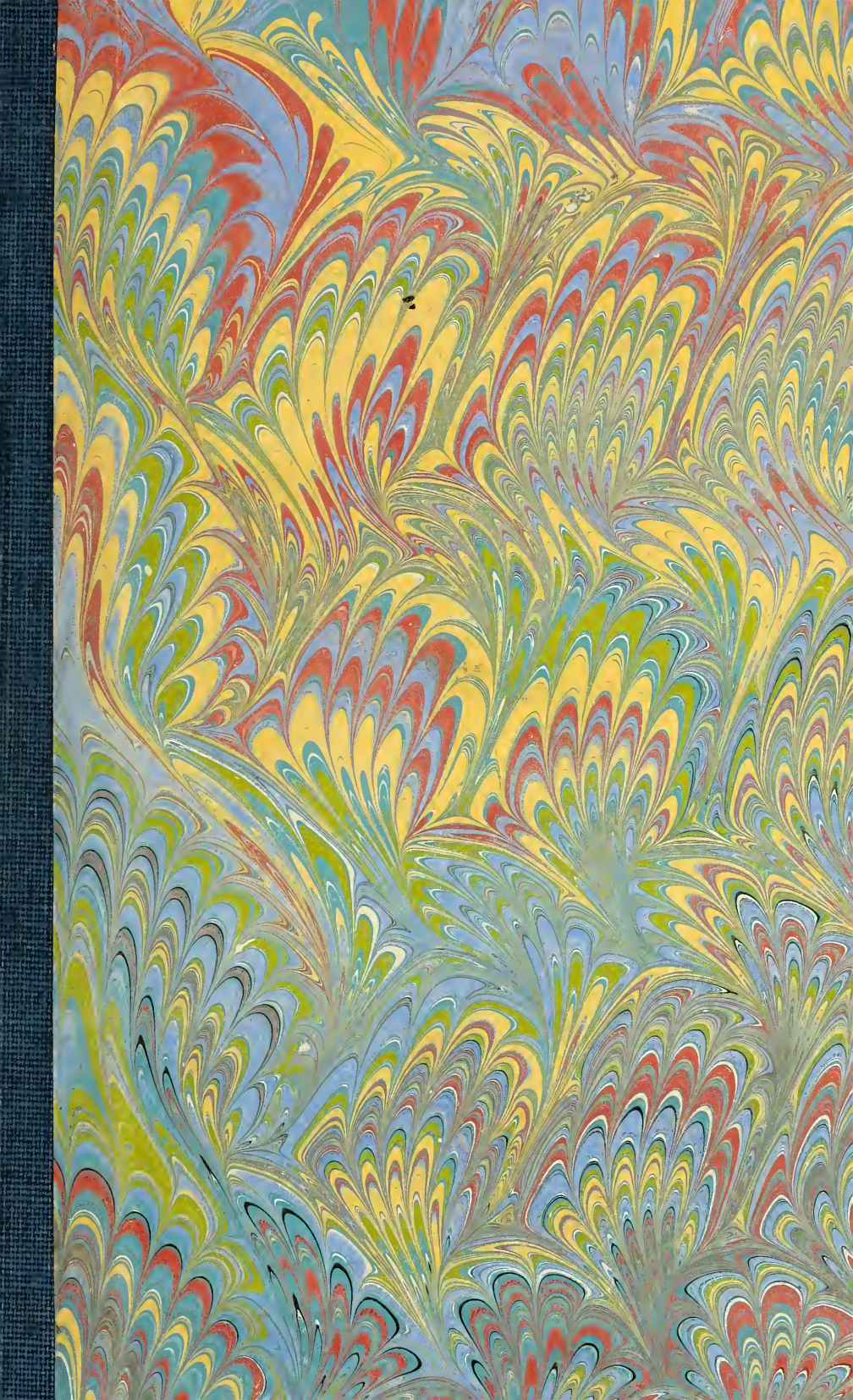

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MARIETTA,

OR THE

TWO STUDENTS.

A TALE OF THE

Dissecting Room and "Body Snatchers."

BY J. H. ROBINSON,

AUTHOR OF "ELLA MONTFIELD," "LADY'S DREAM," &C.

BOSTON:

JORDAN & WILEY,

No. 20 State Street.

1846.

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To G. W. Wakefield, Esq., is the following Tale inscribed, by the author, as a small tribute of friendship.

J. H. R.

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MARIETTA,

OR THE

TWO STUDENTS.

CHAPTER I.

The Dissecting Room.

"How pale and still is the face of this fair corse; what a mild, softened expression lingers about the yet fair mouth, how indicative of rest.

See the eyelids, with their dark fringes closed fast over the sightless balls; mark the "*rapture* of repose" upon the changeless brow; note how quietly those jetty tresses of hair lay on the colorless cheek.

This little white hand, with its long taper fingers, which has been, doubtless, clasped in, and returned the warm pressure of a lover's, lays like a lump of ice in mine, or falls inertly to the table. — And these beautifully rounded limbs, which bespeak the highest effort of a creative power, how unconsciously they rest here.

Gods! how lovely. And yet this is *death;* but never before gazed I upon death in such a guise;—never saw so much calm beauty pictured upon the features of the dead.

I shrink from, and falter in my purpose; I would not mar such a model of human loveliness. How can I disfigure that angelic face—how can I cut, piece meal, the flesh from those delicate limbs, and observe daily the ravages of the scalpel, coupled with the wasting progress of decay, converting it—that corse —into all that is loathsome.

And yet, forsooth, I must do it. The noble study which I am pursuing demands it, though the gentler impulses revolt from the procedure.

Why should I hesitate? Would not the foul lips of the worm, and the chill breath of the tomb produce more awful changes upon this symmetrical clay?— Aye! the primeval curse still rests upon it, and it shall crumble again to its dust, although the protection of a score of leaden coffins were thrown about it. I feel this mode of reasoning is correct, yet I shudder at the idea of mutilating the body of this young girl."

Having uttered slowly, and with a saddened expression these words, the medical student—for so it was—seated himself thoughtfully beside the subject,

over which he had been standing. He was a young man of twenty-three years, of the nervous temperament,—with light hair, and dark blue eyes. His face was pale, indicating much firmness, and self-control, while the contour of his person was slight, not very tall, nor ungraceful.

He was evidently a deep and continual thinker, and though so young, there were thought-furrows legibly imprinted upon his forehead. He wore, as is often the case among medical students, a frock, or garb of india-rubber cloth, fastened loosely about the middle by a belt, with the sleeves buttoned closely about the wrist. Gloves of oiled silk were upon his hands, and between the thumb and fingers of the right he held, with gentle grasp, a common scalpel, the bright blade of which seemed slow to perform its accustomed work. A case of dissecting instruments lay open upon the table, near his left, consisting of tenacula, scissors, small forceps, knives of various shapes, adapted to the various uses into which they might be called, with needles, etc. etc.

Two lamps were burning, by the aid of which he was to perform his not enviable task. The room was small, and the upper one of a three story building. Directly over the body was a window, which during the day admitted sufficient light to serve the purpose of the student, or students, as the case might be. The door was carefully closed and locked, for reasons obvious.

"Ah death!" resumed the student, "thou art a mysterious thing,—a change whether for good or evil I am puzzled to know, and cannot even guess. But in this instance I feel that thou art no unfriendly visitant, else thou wouldst not leave such peaceful, benignant lines upon this young face.

Death! I have looked upon thee often, and in every form, but never knew thee stripped of thy terrors, and mild, and smiling on me thus. When the numbers whose aggregate tells the sum of my existence, shall be counted upon the dial of life, then, inscrutable power, visit me *thus*, and I will not curse thy approach."

Here the pale student was interrupted in his soliloquy by several raps on the door, repeated at regular intervals.—Without a word he arose, unlocked and opened it. Two persons entered, threw off their overcoats, and with a glance towards the corpse seated themselves by a small stove, apparently for the purpose of warming their hands; for a cold December night was that.

The eldest of the two was about thirty-five years of age. His height, the width of his chest, and the size of his limbs, would have done credit to an athlete in the Olympic games, and been the boast of the Gymnasium, had it been his fortune to move in that particular sphere.

But it was not to be thus; he was to be a doctor of medicine; and it is in this very reputable capacity that we have the honor to make his acquaintance.

His hair was of an ebony blackness, very long, and without the least inclination to curl, which is so frequently the case in romances, and legends, while his face was broad and swarthy; his eyes corresponded admirably with the color of his locks, and were restless and piercing.

His person was a perfect model of muscular developement and manliness. There was an expression of good humor upon his open countenance, which would invariably win one's confidence and good will at first sight. Dr. Frene—this was his name—was deeply versed in the knowledge of his profession, and had neglected no opportunity to become thoroughly acquainted with its various branches. Consequently he enjoyed the reputation of being very skilful in the healing art, which reputation he really merited.

If the Doctor had any failings—which is an immunity few can boast—they were towards "virtue's side," that is towards "the sex." There had been certain vague rumors in circulation, among the gossips of the vicinity, in regard to intrigues with married ladies, assignations &c., in the absence of the deceived and much to be commiserated husbands.—But let this pass, and suffice it to say, that the doctor was a man of noble and generous impulses, and possessed of a *soul*, which, if not *sin*-less was capacious, and destitute of meanness. With this remark, which I could not conscientiously make of all his acquaintance, I proceed.

The other individual who accompanied the doctor, was a student much younger, less powerful in form, of fairer complexion, yet more elegant in person, softer in manners, and by some would have been considered more comely His hair was dark a brown, his countenance more ruddy, and his temperament partook more of the sanguine, than either of his companions.

"You have a second subject,"! said the Doctor, after holding his hands to the stove for a moment, addressing himself to the first student.

"I have," replied Levator, who had again resumed his seat beside the table as before, with the scalpel in his hand.

"Have you commenced the dissection?"

"No; and I do not think I shall."

"Do not think you shall! What is the matter with you now? Another fit of melancholy, I expect."

"Nothing of the kind, doctor."

"Why do you sit there then, as moodily as though you were listening to a sermon on future punishment."

"Doctor," replied the latter, rising, and looking him calmly in the face, and with great seriousness, "you are a feeling man, and sensitive; look at this corpse," And drawing gently aside the white cloth which covered the dead, he folded his arms upon his chest, and stepped back to give the doctor and his fellow student an opportunity of seeing.

The doctor gazed for a few moments in silence upon the face of the dead, then with a softened expression turned away, saying,

"Lovely, very lovely! death sits lightly and pleasantly upon those features."

"I cannot mutilate that form, doctor. I have essayed to do so several times, and as often relinquished the attempt.—I have reasoned myself into the belief that I could, and would commence, and when I have with the scalpel in my hand turned towards the body, I have relented, and shrunk from the self-imposed task."

"'Tis quite natural that you should not wish to mar the strange beauty of this subject, it being a female too. Still I do not think it should prevent you from making the dissection."

"I cannot, and I *will* not carry the edge of this instrument across this fair form," was the firm rejoinder of Levator.

"Then I suppose *I* must," said the second student, advancing to the table, and examining the edge of a scalpel. —With your assistance and directions, doctor, I shall, I imagine, make a very decent dissection, although I am astonished at the scruples of Levator. I will now disfigure the face, in order that it may not be recognized, providing it should be discovered by any of the friends of the deceased."

"Eugene," exclaimed Levator with energy, as he beheld him raise the knife, in the attitude of making an incision transversely across the brow, "desist; you shall not disfigure a single lineament of that face. That subject, you will allow, is mine, so far as the purchase of it

can make it so; and I presume you will not hesitate to affirm that I have a right to dispose of it as I shall think proper."

Eugene threw down his scalpel, and looked at his friend as though he were doubting the question of his sanity.

"Am I to understand you to say that I am not to proceed with the dissection, as we intended in the first instance?"

"Exactly, Eugene; nothing more nor less than this. Do you question my right to do so?"

"Certainly not; but permit me to assure you that I think your conduct most singular, not to say *absurd*."

"Undoubtedly you do, but you have heard my determination."

Eugene turned and looked inquiringly at the doctor, as if entreating him to determine if he could, the questionable point of his friend's rationality. But *he* appeared equally at a loss to solve the doubt.

"Levator" said the latter, "I can form an idea of the probable cause of your curious resolution. But—no offence—I believe you carry your sensibility too far. What possible harm can it do that body—fair and delicate it is I allow—to dissect it? Will it feel the keen edge of the knife? Will the tender limbs shrink from it, and give intimations of torture? Do you fear that those closed eyes there, will start open, and that clod-like hand will raise itself, and that still tongue will throw off the spell of death, at the first incision, and entreat you to desist? Fie! where is your manhood?"

"Doctor," said Levator, "I will not say that you are unkind in your remarks, for it would be unlike you to be so: but you can scarcely mean what you have last uttered. Have you not seen me, without anything like fear or hesitation, look upon death in all its awful phases —in the form of wrinkled old age—smiling infancy—and at every point between these extremes? Have I not seen it in every stage of decomposition, and in all its loathsome details? Have you not seen me sever joint from joint, and muscles from muscle a score of times, without the least symtoms of emotion?—Speak?"

"I have; and no one can do it with more address and coolness, and it is this fact, contrasted with your present conduct that astonishes me. I have often thought that I never knew a student so indifferent to the "disagreeables" of a dissecting room as yourself; but to-night you are a *woman*."

"Hold, doctor," said Eugene gaily, "you are wrong this time. If he were a woman *you* would hardly disagree with him. Confess it, doctor."

"You are not far from the truth, in this instance, Eugene," replied the doctor, good humoredly. "And it is not impossible that *you* might be on better terms with him, if he were in good faith what I have said."

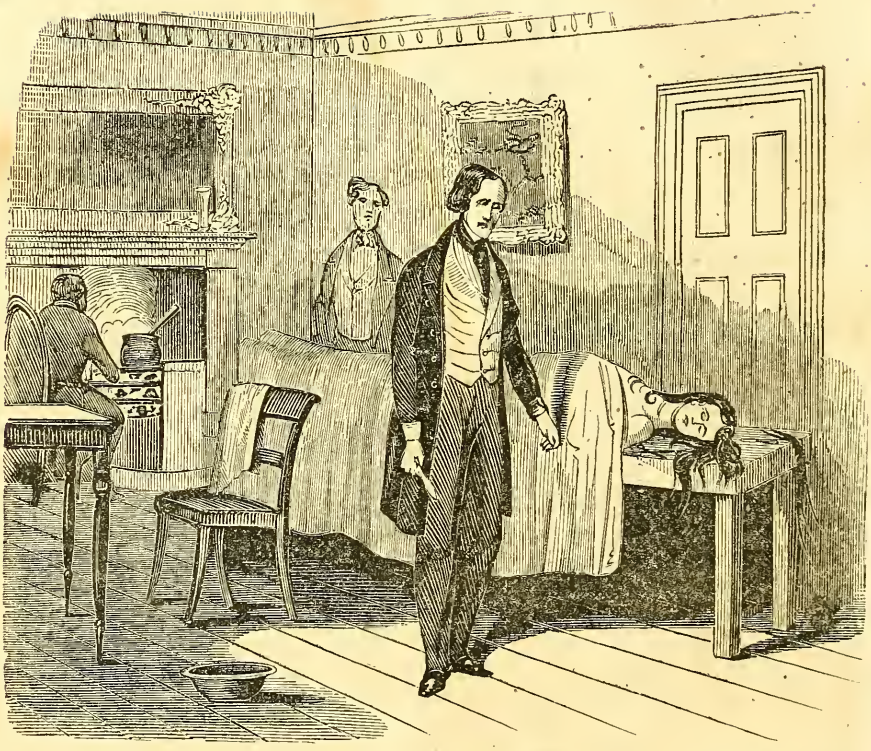
"Wrong again, Doctor, I have not advanced so far in the "profession" as that; but under your tuition, I hope to make wonderful progress."

"No doubt of it," retorted the doctor, drily, with a twinkle of the eye, which I believe is peculiar to no other man, and wincing slightly, as though he had experienced a sudden pain somewhere about the mouth.

He then stepped to the table, upon which lay the subject, and seemed examining it attentively, as though determining internally where he should commence operations.

He took the scalpel, carried the back of it longitudinally across the chest, apparently for the purpose of giving accuracy to the stroke he should make with the edge.

"Doctor," said Levator calmly, "you have heard what I have said; I need scarcely repeat it."



He then stepped to the table, upon which lay the subject, and seemed examining it attentively, as though determining internally where he should commence operations. Page 6.

"I heard, but could not believe that you really intended what you gave utterance to. It was so unlike you."

"I repeat it then: that body shall not be mutilated with a dissecting knife."

"You are beside yourself."

"I am, on the contrary, perfectly sane."

"What will you do with it then."

"I will return it to the quiet grave from whence it was taken, and get another. A form like this should not be rudely gazed upon, by the curious eye of the vulgar. Oh! no: it shall be laid gently away again in its earthy home, and feel the rough touch of the student at work with its limbs never. The coarse jest of the thoughtless and unfeeling shall never be uttered over it, or fall—unheard though it be — even upon these dead ears!"

While speaking, the form of the pale student seemed to dilate to an unusual size. He was more erect and dignified than he was wont to be; and his companions were struck with his determined air, and such an extraordinary exhibition of firmness in him.

"I perceive that you are really in earnest, and mean to do just what you have said, so I suppose it is of no use to reason with you on the absurdity of your resolve. But I am, I acknowledge, dissatisfied with you. However, let it pass, and when you get another, I shall be at your service, and happy to assist."

Saying this, the doctor and the student departed, leaving Levator alone with his subject.

"They will think I am doing a foolish thing, but no matter, I feel that I am not obstinate, nor wrong in my intentions, and this consoles me. I know not the reason why, yet something I know not what, tells me not to mar this body with the ruthless knife, and I obey the mysterious impulse, even at the hazard of ridicule. I will now find the resurrectionist. He shall place it safely in the tomb, from whence it was taken, unscathed in body or limbs, where it may crumble and mingle peacefully, and in obedience to natural laws with its kindred atoms. Let me look upon it again, the body of that girl—is it possible that it can feel the desolating touch of putrefaction. I could hope not, and yet it must."

Saying this, he bent over the corpse, and took the cold hand in his. On one of the stiff fingers were two plain rings. Drawing one gently from its place, he replaced it by one from his own; then carefully covering it again, he locked the door, put the key in his pocket, and passed into the street.

CHAPTER II.

The Body-Snatchers.

The location of our tale is Boston, and the scenes of the first chapter passed in Marshall street, a short one, leading from Union to Hanover street, its date is, 1842.

On Commercial street at this date, near one of the principal wharves, stood a large and rather antique block of buildings with granite front, many of which, had formerly been occupied as trading warehouses, but now on account of their dilapidated condition, were used for other purposes.

Some were used merely as places of storage, while others were occupied as dwelling houses by the more indigent class of laborers, and those who procured a livelihood by no visible means, and yet continued to exist.

One of these tenements, more black and frowning in its external appearance than its neighbors, and which stood near the water, was the residence of several individuals with whom in due time we will make the reader acquainted.

From the first floor to the attic, the interior presented unquestionable evidence of neglect and decay, while but a very few of the apartments could posibly, to all appearance afford accommodation to human beings, they having long ago been abandoned to the exclusive jurisdiction and occupation of rats and mice, or whatever other genus of animals found them convenient and commodious.

Let us enter, beginning at the first door on the left, and see what is passing within. The apartment in which you find yourself was once used as a victualing cellar, and the large board which had announced the gratifying fact to the public, now faded and cracked in an hundred places, is used as a kind of bar to secure the door upon the inside. — Everything here speaks of poverty and wretchedness. There are no chairs, and the deficiency is supplied by a rude bench and blocks, which had the peculiar hues of long use. You are looking for a table; there is none; that remnant of a counter there serves the purpose of one.

You observe two persons. The one is very tall, and nearly or perhaps quite sixty years of age. Did you ever look upon such a ghastly visage—such a hollow corpse-like cheek—such a thin, sharp nose — such deeply sunken eyes—such a grim deformity for a mouth, whose lips hug closely the toothless gums, and such a frightful distance from the nether lip to the apex of the chin—or did you ever gaze upon such a low, horribly wrinkled forehead, or greyer and more closely matted locks than his?

You never did. Nor would you, were you to look into the grave; for there is not another such face in the universe living or dead, as that old man's. There is not a single lineament of his sharp, colorless features that you can contemplate with pleasure.

A skeleton by some ingenious device

of satan, or some one else—invested with a scant covering of skin, might bear some resemblance to him; and this is aught that we have any knowledge of that would. Observe his shrunken body, and long limbs. Is it possible there is life there? Are we indeed in the presence of a mortal? Or one of the many who upon a day, many, very many years ago, stepped out of their graves, and were seen abroad? No; 'tis not one of those, but a wreck of a human being. He is called Gaunt; and is a "body-snatcher."

The other person in physical conformation, differs from him materially; being quite short, very stout, and muscular in form, with features exceedingly coarse and large, full of daring and hardihood. Every part of him is indicative of strength; and he breathes an air of defiance and recklessness. Like his companion, his dress is dark, and of a very ordinary quality, fitting but indifferently.

We will introduce this gentleman as Mr. Thick, he follows for a livelihood the same respectable branch of business as the former. Having given this brief description of these two characters, we will notice the manner in which they are employed. The latter arises from the bench upon which he has been sitting, and after confering a moment with his companion, opens a small door which communicates with a room in the rear of the one in which they now are, and equaling it in every respect so far as filth and wretchedness is concerned. He opens a large chest, which sits in an obscure corner of the apartment, and with some little effort, takes from it a sack which contains apparently some heavy material. The door is cautiously secured by Gaunt, and they hesitate a few moments before proceeding, as if to assure themselves that they are entirely free from interruption. They now undo the fastenings of the sack, then reversing it, a human body in its grave-dress falls heavily and with a startling dull sound to the floor. Now they commence disrobing it, throwing each piece of that last habit upon the few embers that are glowing upon the broken hearth stone. While—emiting a nauseating effluvia,—they are devoured by the scorching element.

The work is soon done, and the body of what was but a short time since a strong man in the very prime of life, is before them in perfect nudity. They contemplate it with the greatest apparent satisfaction; examining like connoisseurs the well rounded limbs, full chest, and muscular developement.

"A stout fellow was this," said Thick, regarding his friend with a satisfied air; there must have been great power in these large muscles and finely formed hands." "You say truly, but he's tame enough now Thick, although I would take my oath that a few days ago he would have been more than a match for you."

"A good subject. I never saw a better, Gaunt."

"I agree with you that I never saw a *better:* but the young girl we sold to that pale student Levator, how much handsomer to look upon."

"Right, Gaunt, for once. I never beheld anything in the shape of death, so fair. That female, she must have been very beautiful when living."

"I don't think that would follow as a natural consequence. Many homely persons make a handsome corpse."

"I would like to see you after you are dead, Gaunt, if what you say is true."

"I should look quite respectable, I assure you."

"Die then by all means for your own credit, and the sake of your friends."

"That must be a great change, though, which makes you a respectable man. I can think of only one greater: that which

makes you honest. But to speak to the point, what are we to receive for this corpse."

"All we can get, which should not be a trifle. We have risked much to get it; our reputation."

"A great hazard for us both, by G—," replied Gaunt, laughing in a manner that fully explained all he felt in regard to the absurdity of the idea.

"And the risk of detection is not all, Gaunt, the labor must also be reckoned in the account beside the intrinsic value of the body."

"Exactly."

"And look! Gaunt, as I performed most of the labor, I shall be entitled as a matter of course, to the largest share of the money."

"I do n't see the force of that argument."

"Here is the *force* of the argument," replied Thick, quickly, holding up both his enormous fists in a very peculiar manner before Gaunt, "do you see it any better now."

"Yes I understand," replied Gaunt, stepping back to make a wider space between himself and Thick, "but it is not fair."

Thick was about to apply his most cogent reasons in justification of the course he had marked out to pursue, when a knocking without interrupted the proceedings and put an end to the interesting process.

"Who's there," growled Thick, surlily placing himself against the door, while Gaunt was endeavoring with all his strength to drag the corpse into the adjoining room.

"Levator," said a voice without, "let me in. I have business with you." The bar is taken from the door, and the pale student whom we left an hour ago with the fair subject, enters, and the entrance is again barricaded as previously.

"Glad to see you, doctor"—(he always called him doctor when he wished to be obliged,) said Thick with an attempt to look very amiable, I have one of the finest subjects you ever put the knife to—a full grown man—died suddenly—muscles well developed—do you good to look at it."

"Is it a very recent one," inquired the student.

Quite—died three days since—buried yesterday—*raised* last night—a heavy fellow—much as I could do to drag him from the coffin—knife will go through it so smooth—can make a clean dissection—come and see."

"Very good indeed," replied Levator, looking attentively at the body. It will answer my purpose admirably.—It is quite fresh—in an excellent state of preservation. What price do you set upon it, Mr. Thick."

"Thirty-five dollars."

"That is exorbitant."

"Not a cent less, doctor."

"That is more than I have ever given."

"You never had so good a subject."

"It is a very fine one, Thick, and I will give you thirty."

"Say five, doctor, and it is yours."

"Not a farthing more."

"What do you think, Gaunt," said Thick thoughtfully, leaning towards that worthy person, "shall we, seeing it is our very good friend the doctor, conclude the bargain and consent to loose the other five, which the subject is really worth?"

The person to whom this question was dictated paused a short time as if deeply weighing the subject, and then nodded his head by way of assent, as a man would do in making a great sacrifice.

"The subject is yours, doctor, although I assure you, in good faith, that I would not hazard as much again for twice the sum."

While saying this he tries to bear the air of a martyr, but still acts like one

who has made a good bargain, or done a clever thing and is pleased.

"This piece of business is concluded, and now I have an affair on my hands in which I need your assistance."

"Speak, we are ready," cries Thick. who seems to act as spokesman, "It is probably to awake another *sleeper.*"

"Exactly the reverse."

"What is that you say? Is it not to take a body from the earth that you want us?"

"You have heard correctly: it is to put one in."

"To bury one, eh!"

"Just so."

"Explain.

"You recollect the last subject—the female."

"Perfectly."

"That—mark my words—must be returned to the grave as you found it, to-night—without the least delay."

Gaunt recoiled a step—opened his frightful mouth, fixed his eyes in a dubious manner on the young man, and gave other intimations of extreme astonishment, while Thick, looked at him with a puzzled air, and then laughed in a style peculiar to himself.

"Do you comprehend me fully?" continued Levator, firmly. I wish the body of that young girl, that your sacrilegious hands dragged rudely from its resting place, carried back and placed precisely as you found it in the first instance. Am I intelligible?"

"Yes—I—I—you—but—

(Peremptorily.) "No remonstrances. I'll not listen to them; you know my wishes and that is quite enough."

"Had you not better wait until to—"

"No, I shall not.; It is impossible.—And see, here is your reward when you have faithfuly performed your task."—(holding up some bank notes.)

"Ah! my senses are more acute now. I take your meaning more readily," cried Thick, rubbing his hands with delight. I will *earth* that body for you in no time."

"Thick," said Levator, sternly, laying his hand upon his shoulder and gazing so steadily into his eye that he shrunk from the scrutiny and looked doggedly at Gaunt; "Thick, there must be no jugglery about this transaction, everything must be as I direct. But should you attempt to deceive me—and you will not hesitate to if you think there is the least prospect of succeeding—you shall suffer the consequences, and they will not be light."

"Pray what would you do," gasped Thick, turning pale.

"Expose your nefarious trade."

"There will be no occasion for that, doctor, we will perform our part of the contract faithfully, provided we make one."

"Do you promise to do what I require for this sum?"

(Both.) "We do."

"This very night?"

(Both.) "Aye, immediately."

"Is the burial place far from this?"

"Across the Mystic. We shall take it over in a boat. We keep it for the business."

"Very good; come with me."

"Taking a sack from the floor, and folding it into as small a space as possible, Gaunt thrust it beneath the folds of his coat, and with Thick followed Levator into the street, first taking the precaution to call an ugly looking female of advanced age, who soon made her appearance from an upper room, and whose province it appeared to be to guard the premises in the absence of the body-snatchers.

Groping his way through narrow lanes, dark courts, and unfrequented streets, his suspicious looking companions a short distance in the rear, Levator found himself once more in the apart-

ment he had so recently left and again beside the body of that young girl whom even in death he loved to gazed upon. It was to him a kind of pleasure, but a melancholy one, and called up many thoughts which he had never before given being to. The body was no longer in a state of nudity, but dressed in its appropriate garb. Who had done it?—The answer is obvious—the pale student, for he revolted at the idea, familiar as he was with such scenes, of those rude men gazing with unhallowed eye upon it.

Thou wert right, Levator, quite right! harbor such delicate and refined feelings ever, and thou wilt repent it never.

CAPTER III.

Cecil.

So saying, she embraced him, and for joy
Tenderly wept; much won, that he his love,
Had so ennobled, as of choice to incur
Divine displeasure for her sake, or death.
MILTON.

LEAVING the dissecting room, we return directly to the gray "granite block" we have so recently left. Entering at the second door, the interior view is much the same as that of the neighboring tenements, with the exception that it is better furnished, and has more habitable apartments. Several wretched beds are seen in different parts of the house which are not the most cleanly or healthy in their appearance. One must be very *tired* and sleepy to *rest* upon such couches; and let us go farther and say that no one ever *did*, or ever *will* rest upon such as *those*.

No! *no!* there is not the *shadow* of rest there.

There may be intervals of rest in the wild delirium of fever, upon the rack,—on the scaffold, in the death struggle, but *there, never*. Sin holds her court there, and this is the house of the *wanton*.

In an apartment cleaner, and more tastefully arranged than any of the others, is a young female, turning impatiently the leaves of a book. Her features are very pretty, her form unexceptionable, and her dress much too good to be in keeping with every thing, or any thing about her.

She is sitting, or more properly reclining, with all the abandon imaginable upon the side of her bed. She has evidently on this occasion taken unusual pains to make her toilet. Her hair is a glossy brown, and curled with the greatest care, and as it floats about her neck, certainly makes her attractive, not to say *beautiful*, which perhaps would be a more appropriate term.

Look at her, with her witching little mouth, ruby lips, dimpled cheeks, and dark languishing eye, is she not dangerous to the virtue of a young man!

See how coquetishly she raises her

hand, throws back her hair, and looks at a small mirror that is suspended upon the wall opposite. She is pleased with her appearance, and yet, not *altogether* satisfied, for she seems to think her dress too high at the bosom, and takes out a pin, which exposes that part of her person more fully to view; and she is conscious—apparently—that the operation has added to her charms. She is expecting a visitor, and shows her anxiety and impatience by starting at every foot-fall she hears upon the pavement. Now she lays aside the book, with which she has been trying to beguile the time, and arising from her recumbent position, walks several times across her not capacious room, then resumes it and becomes thoughtful. "A strange life is this,"—she said with much sadness in her manner,—"its moments of pleasure sink into mere insignificance when contrasted with its bitterness. The same voice that tells me I am beautiful, will also remind me of my fall—the same lips that caress will also insult. How soon is the charm that brings a lover dispelled—the moment succeeding, possession sees his exaggerated adulation converted into disgust—his flattery into reproach. Then perchance he will say, that a favor that is purchased with money is worthless, and a wanton's love is an article of merchandise, and exists but in name. I feel that there is too much truth in the cruel remark, but why should *they* who partake of my guilt, taunt me with lewdness, are they not equally reprehensible? The other sex are willing to share the guilty pleasures held out to them by the abandoned of mine, but are very careful that we bear the *infamy*." Then the fair soliloquizer gave every indication of being excessively provoked that such a state of things—so very much opposed to her idea of justice—should exist.

But she was a woman, and must therefore submit with as much grace as she might. She is now silent, and apparently is trying to reconcile herself to the "forms of society" so palpably at variance with her feelings.

Here she breaks it with—"Why *don't* he come?" (petuently) Nine was the hour, and now it is past ten.

What *can* keep him away? Oh! these men how fickle they *are*. Probably he has gone to see some one else—handsome and young no doubt.

Oh! if I had her here wouldn't I tear her *eyes* out? Wouldn't I throw nitric acid in her ugly face? False Eugene, how could you deceive me thus? how I hate you, yes I *do hate* you, I *know* I do.

Wonder how old she is?—for there is not the least doubt but there is *somebody* he loves better—cruel Eugene, how could you do so mean a thing. I suppose she is handsome, (looking in the glass,) and I shall like her the less for *that*.

During this outbreak of passion and jealousy, the door had softly opened, and a young man, whom the reader will recognize as the student of Dr. Frene, entered unobserved, and hears that interesting part which relates to himself, and now before she has the least warning of his proximity, she finds herself in the arms of a young man, and almost sitfled with kisses; she struggles—though but faintly—to free herself. "What young lady is it, Cecil, to whom you have taken such a marked antipathy?" he cries with a laugh, looking into her flushed face.

"You must answer that question, yourself, sir, for I am sure you can do so better than I," replied Cecil with considerable asperity. "Been playing the truant, have you?"

"Don't be angry, Cecil, I was detained on urgent business."

"*Very*, I expect," retorted the vexed little lady, mockingly.

"I assure you I was."

"How can I doubt it." (Ironically.)

"What on earth could keep me from you, Cecil, but business of importance."

"Very true *what could?*" was the somewhat softened, but still petulent rejoinder.

But why should we particularize, this quarrel ended as usual in such cases, with a kiss, and they were soon the very best of friends, apparently.

"Did you know that I do not like to live here," said Cecil, after a pause.

"I have thought you would fancy a better place, and resolved sometime since to procure one more suited to your taste."

"Do, Eugene, for this is a fearful place. Everything is so mysterious, and we have such strange neighbors. I tremble at the approach of that horrible old woman. Eugene, they have such rude visitors here, that one is not free from insult and even violence. In the next room there are voices and noises of all descriptions, to be heard at any hour of night, and what is more singular they keep perfectly quiet during the day. Sometimes I hear a heavy body fall to the floor, and often the sound of violent disputes and altercations, though I seldom distinguish the words. At others, a strange sickening effluvia finds its way through these dilapidated and crumbling walls, and almost nauseates me. At one time I contrived to look through this crevice, and saw a horrible looking old man, with a white cloth in his hand, and—ugh—I shudder when I think of it—which resembled a corpse-dress. A frightful looking man was that, Eugene,—with such a thin, ghastly face, and so frightfully wrinkled. What do you suppose they do in that room?" continued Cecil in an inquiring tone and with a thoughtful air.

"I cannot enlighten you on that point," replied the student coloring, and with an involuntary shudder. "I would if I could, but what means have I of knowing."

"What agitates you? I would like to learn the doings on the other side of that wall though. I suspect there might be some startling developmeuts made," continued Cecil musingly, and without any pauses between her broken sentences. "I have suspected that this vile old woman here, who boards me, has some communication with our mysterious neighbors."

"I hope not, Cecil," (quickly and with energy.) "I hope your suspicions are groundless."

"May they *prove* so, Eugene, but I have a certain presentiment that they will not, I am afraid to stay here," (with great seriousness). Do not reproach me with weakness, but I feel that I am in danger. I dream continually of that old man, and the virago—and see blood upon her hand, within which glitters a sharp blade dyed with the same fluid; and then, covered with perspiration and trembling in every limb, I awake and wish you were here. Oh! Eugene, (weeping) you know not what I suffer in your absence—which seems so long, *very* long—both from my own outraged conscience, and those curious, indescribable forbodings.

"Calm your fears, my love, for I trust they are wholly idle, so far as harm to you is concerned. 'Tis but natural that you should be low spirited at intervals—all are."

Then he drew her to his bosom—that fond but erring girl—and with his warm passionate caresses, stilled for the present, the terrors that fed upon her heart.

Poor blighted heart of hers, it could still love, and thrilled to the touch of her lover, but it was not a calm, smoothly flowing love.

"Her love was passion's essence—as a tree
On fire by lightning,"

and now she lavished it all upon Eugene.

No one legally authorized had united them, and yet she was *his;* but hark, how feeble was thd tenure of that heart which she held.

Since her seducer had forsaken and left her to the horrors of prostitution, she had clung to Eugene. She was his mistress.

Thoughtless young man! you should have won her from evil and back to virtue, instead of plunging her deeper in the vortex of sin.

You should—Eugene—you should have reproved her kindly as an erring sister.

But you did not, and that moment—crisis we might say—has passed forever.

You were wrong there, Eugene, and the time *will* come, when that reflection will be a source of unending regret. It will avail but little then, for mayhap the form of that young girl who loves you, will be cold, *very* cold, and far beyond the reach of sympathy. Think of *that,* and when you leave the embraces of Cecil to seek the retirement of home and the society of sisters, remember that she has neither the one or the other.

If these suggestions will make your slumbers sweeter or deeper, you are welcome to them.

'Twas past midnight when he left Cecil and sought his own residence. The occurrences of the day and evening passed in review before him, and some of them were not pleasing; the reasons for which the reader will see more plainly anon. Cecil lay upon her couch so recently vacated by her lover, and thought bitterly of the three relative conditions of life—the *past,* the *present* and the *future.* The first contrasted strangely with the second, and the second was made still more wretched by the prospective misery of the third, which in her mind was more portentous of evil.

A short time had elapsed after the departure of Eugene, when those sounds which created alarm on former occasions were again renewed. She listened to the cautious moving of heavy feet, and the low voices of persons who evidently wished not to be heard.

The same odor came to her nostrils, which almost nauseated her previously. Arising partially in bed, she placed her eye to a small fissure in the wall, and saw the same person whom she had seen once before, with another and not much better looking individual. They were now tearing the shroud from a dead body. A faintness crept over the poor girl when she made this fearful discovery, and she could scarcely refrain from shrieking with terror, but with a strong effort she checked the impulse, and kept her eyes fastened upon what was passing before her. Trembling, she marked the indifference with which they handled the corpse, and that coarseness and brutal want of feeling which characterized every movement.

"Had they committed murder?—What was their object?—What would they do with that body?" were questions which naturally suggested themselves to Cecil. But she was not long in doubt—the truth flashed in upon her, and the object of this proceeding was but too evident. She was witnessing unobserved, the midnight doings of the "Body Snatchers."

They had rifled the grave of its dead, and were now putting the finishing touch to their work. It was ready for the dissecter's knife. The agitation of Cecil seemed to increase instead of subsiding, and she felt—why she could not tell—a strange trembling curiosity to see the face of that corpse. With a rough

motion, Gaunt tore the napkin from the head, it rolls heavily to one side, and towards Cecil, but—oh God! what a face! did human being ever present such a one before? Never! Where should be the nose, was seen only a *blackened cavity*—the cheek had *sloughed* off during life, and presented only a spongy and half decayed bone—around the eyes which were imperfectly closed, was a dark putrid line, while the throat was swollen, and what remained of the teeth of the lower jaw, were exposed to view, by the absence of the nether lip, which had perished as other portions of the face—yet reader, in that horrid visage she recognized her seducer.

CHAPTER IV.

Something Unexpected.

It was nine o'clock when the Body Snatchers left the dissecting room of Levator, with the "fair subject" placed carefully under the direction of the latter, in the sack provided for the purpose. For a while they moved cautiously along with their burden in silence, threading their way through the most unfrequented alleys.

"This grows heavier," said Thick, pausing to rest. "I believe people are heaviest when dead."

"Of course they are," replied his companion patronisingly. "I knew it long ago."

"Perhaps a little practical knowledge would make you still more sensible of the fact. So let me lift this upon your shoulder."

"I have no doubts at all upon the subject, Mr. Thick. I am satisfied of the truth of what you offer without any experiments," cried Gaunt, deprecatingly, edging himself away from his friend.

"But you must carry it, or I shall leave it in the street," insisted Thick, who was well aware that it was beyond the strength of Gaunt to bear it; but still he wished for a little sport at his expense. "There, be careful that you do not let it fall," he continued, placing it safely on the shoulder of his skeleton comrade. Keep cool—steady—stand a little more erect—if you please—so—exert yourself—ah! you are doing finely."

"By an effort into which he threw all the strength yet remaining in his shriveled frame, he managed to support the body, and totter—it could not be called walking—a few paces, to the great amusement of his friend, who followed closely upon his footsteps, instructing and commending, as the nature of the case would allow. At length completely exhausted, he was about to fall to the pavement, when Thick humanely resumed his burden.

"I had rather carry two living bodies than one dead one,' gasped Gaunt, when he had sufficiently recovered himself to speak.

"Would you not want your pay for it, providing you had to carry one every night," said Thick triumphantly, supposing that he had now cornered his fault-finding friend, as he considered him. But he was very much mistaken. There was no such thing as getting the advantage of him in point of argument.

"If I were as strong and able bodied as you, Thick, I should prefer carrying the bodies to doing any thing else," was the reply of the not at all disconcerted Gaunt.

"The devil you would, retorted his companion," chafed at his coolness, and the method by which he freed himself from what he had believed a dilemma.

Here they stepped into an alley to let a cab pass, sat down the sack, and a long silence ensued, which was broken at length by Thick.

"I think it will be taking much unnecessary trouble to re-bury this body, merely to humor the whim of this sickly looking student."

"I have thought so from the beginning, Thick."

"Besides," returned the other, "we might very well dispose of it to much better advantage."

"Easily—nothing simpler. We can tell him that all has been done as he wished."

"A very profitable subject this—sold it for a round sum once—paid for taking it again—and now we have the same chance of repeating the operation."

"Capital."

Having discussed this important point to their satisfaction, they again proceeded towards their residence.

How seldom do we do what we purpose to, and how often is the execution of that which we, in the first instance, consider as already done, thwarted. It was so in this case, for the "Body Snatchers" had proceeded but a short distance, when two men came suddenly and unceremoniously upon them. The stouter of the two seized Thick by the throat, while the other took possession of the sack containing the subject. The former then loosing his grasp, suffered him to escape and follow the flight of his companion, already considerably in advance.

If the tall "resurrectionist" was good for nothing else, he was certainly remarkable for speed, which he was not slow in proving.

Spiritual beings are said to have the speed of thought in their motions, and he was as near the condition of one as he well could be; therefore the swiftness of his flight may be in some degree accounted for.

Thus far we have written the transactions of a night. We will now pass over the period of a day to the succeeding night. The hour of nine found Dr. Frene in his office on ——— street, with Eugene. The shutters were carefully closed and fastened, as was also the door, and the curtains closely drawn. A table was near the centre of the room, on which was something covered with a white cloth. The Dr. and the student divested themselves of the coats they usually wore, and donned frocks prepared for the purpose; then several cases of surgical and dissecting instruments were taken from their respective places, and laid upon the table. A small pot of red wax was boiling on the coals in the grate. Strong waxed threads were near the instruments to serve as ligatures.

"Shall you inject by the Aorta or the Femoral artery, Dr.," said Eugene, taking a scalpel.

"By the Femoral artery, I think the wax can be thrown with better effect, especially into the minute vessels."

"Hold your scalpel in this way, Eugene, and make a clear, bold stroke, and be careful not to make the incision too large."

"It is impossible, Dr. to make a clean cut with this. However, it is but a moment's work to bring it to an edge." Saying this, the student commenced the task of sharpening his instrument, which he bid fair to finish shortly, for he did it with the skill of a master.

"Don't you think, Dr., that I made quite a handsome amputation the other night?"

"You amputated it evidently, but such a stump as you made."

"Ah! that stump, I shall never hear the last of it—but confess that I did the business expeditiously, and very well for a tyro."

"Yes, Eugene, but if you had been operating on the living subject, you would have found it more difficult. And then such unheard-of strokes, and such mangling—why—I should seriously have thought that that limb was bitten off by a shark, had I not known to the contrary,—no offence, Eugene,—but really, I cannot help laughing. However, I dare say you did as well as I when no more practised."

"Better, no doubt," replied Eugene testily, and no more was said of the unfortunate stump.

The doctor then took the large pipe, prepared on purpose for the business, and was about to fill it with the colored wax which he was to throw into the vessels of the subject, when a new idea seemed to strike him.

"Eugene, I think we had better make a few experiments on this subject with the Galvanic battery."

"Excellent, Dr., let us proceed at once," cried Eugene, delighted at the idea of witnessing the wonderful power of electricity upon the dead body.

The battery was produced and properly charged, the white cloth drawn from that which lay upon the table. Amazement—it was the same body that had been carried from the dissecting room of Levator the preceeding night; and there it was—that corpse—in all its unearthly beauty about to be offered for the advancement of science.

"Did you ever look on anything so calmly beautiful, Eugene, so serenely expressive of peace?"

"Never?" replied the student in a low, subdued voice; for the sight of that corpse had softened his heart.

"I cannot blame Levator much for what we termed his squeamishness."

"You are not about to form the same resolution, are you, Eugene?"

"Not I. I am not so easily turned from my purpose."

"Make a very small incision, Eugene, just back of the ear, near the occipital foramen. Now place the conductor in the orifice, and I will throw in a current of the Galvanic fluid."

A spark of the mysterious agent coursed along the wire, but produced no other effect than a slight shuddering motion of the trunk and limbs, and a nervous twitching of the eye-lids.

The machine was charged still higher and applied as before, but with more frightful effect. The eye-lids were thrown open, and the sightless balls rolled over in the sockets, and were fixed in a glassy stare upon the operators, while a frightful grimace disfigured the mouth, and a prolonged, terrible tremor convulsed the whole frame. So powerful was the effect, that even the operators were appalled, but quickly collecting themselves, they resolved on making another experiment. Charging the machine as high as possible, they again applied it. This time, the body was agitated more fearfully than before—quivered an instant, then raised itself partly in a sitting posture, fell back, and a deep painful groan issued from its white lips, while the hand, which but a moment before lay so listless by the side, seized

with a convulsive gripe the arm of Eugene, who, horrified beyond measure, shook it from him, and recoiled to the farther part of the room.

The Doctor was nearer losing his presence of mind than ever before; but he was used to scenes of horror, and comprehending the nature of the case, proceeded with considerable calmness to do what was proper,—opened a vein —poured the most powerful medicines into her mouth—held volatile salts to her nostrils, and soon had the inexpressible pleasure of seeing that fair girl restored to life, and wrested from the very embraces of death.

* * * * *

The day previous to the commencement of our narrative, a young girl on a visit to her uncle, who lived in C———, died suddenly, and was buried before her parents had heard the terrible news, they being at the time absent from home, which was but a short ride from Boston.

* * * * *

We now return to the body snatchers. After being so unceremoniously robbed of their burden, disappointed and frightened they made the best of their way to their lodging, muttering curses upon those who had stepped between them and their hopes of further gain. They had already realized a large profit from the body, and were confident of further emolument from the same source. But they were men of business, and resolved to mend the matter as quickly as possible, which could be done by procuring another subject in the usual manner. Thick recollected that there was a funeral that day at C———, and proposed to Gaunt that they should proceed forthwith to the cemetery and raise the body, provided it should be an adult; and to fire the flagging zeal of that worthy, he stipulated to ask no extra payment for his labor, which he was obliged to perform on account of the incapacity of the former. To this, Gaunt readily assented, although he allowed he *was* somewhat fatigued, and a little, a *very* little frustrated by their recent rencontre. It was now ten o'clock, and the night was favorable to their design, very dark and black clouds obscured most effectually the faint light of the stars, and that which the last quarter of the moon might otherwise have thrown upon the earth. Providing themselves with the necessary implements—a spade, a small iron bar, a sack, dark lantern, &c., they stepped into the small boat which was fastened to the wharf, and silently commenced their passage across the Mystic, Thick plying the oars most vigorously, and Gaunt guiding the course of the tiny vessel.

In three quarters of an hour, they found themselves on the opposite side, and drawing the boat to the bank in such a manner as to conceal it from view, and taking the tools with which they were to operate, they took their way by the most untraveled streets, to the church-yard, which was a short distance from the more thickly settled part of the village.

It was necessary to observe much caution in their movements, and considerable time elapsed before they reached the cemetery. The spot of earth that had been so recently opened to receive the remains of a human being, was easily found, and by its length they knew it to be an adult. Fortunately for them, the grave was not yet turfed over, and it would require less skill to obliterate all traces of their work. Two costly marble slabs, setting forth by an inscription the virtues of the departed, were planted one at either end of the mound. Upon the head-stone was chiseled by an accomplished hand the following: "Sacred to the memory of ———, son of the late ———, aged 28. He lived like a man and died like a Christian, in the

hope of a joyful resurrection." And then followed a lofty strain of panegyric which we will not repeat.

"He hoped for a resurrection," said Thick, after perusing attentively the inscription, "and a resurrection he shall have right speedily, or there are no such things as doctors." He then commenced unearthing the body with a skill which denoted a practised arm,—beginning at the head-stone, and opening about one third of the length of the grave; his comrade watching like a blood-hound at a short distance, to give the alarm in case of intrusion or discovery.

In less than an hour the operator had reached the coffin, and by means of the bar had broken the lid, dragged out the corpse by the small opening he had thus made, thrust it into the sack, and filled the grave, being careful that it preserved as much as possible its original appearance; then placing the sack upon his shoulder, they left the cemetery as stealthily as they had entered.

CHAPTER V.

Death.

At the time of the guilty amours of Eugene and Cecil, and one door from the apartment they occupied, a young female was dying. Sin had done its worst, and the eye of a connoisseur could not tell, or even guess what she *had* been, from beholding what she was. The room was wretched beyond description, and in it there was not an article of comfort, not even a chair.

The couch on which she lay, was too dirty and coarse to support the feeble limbs of a dying woman. The tattered covering was too scant to subserve its purpose—warmth and decency—while the straw beneath had probably been used for many months. An expression of hopelessness and dread unutterable was pictured on her ghastly face. The skin seemed to be drawn downward from the eye towards the chin, giving the face a horribly lengthened appearance.—About the external canthus of the eye was the only exception to this, and here it was corrugated in a frightful manner, showing a course of dissipation and vice. One of her emaciated hands with its bony fingers was clenched in her hair, while the other was moving painfully about the throat, which was discolored and swollen. Her teeth were black and offensive, and her mouth, partly open, disclosed foul ulcers within. That disease which so frequently marks the finale of such a life, was ending her days. Her voice was gone, and when she attempted to speak the sounds died away in inaudible and hollow murmurs in the throat. She would perhaps have prayed, but those lips, polluted and weak as

they were, could not articulate the words of prayer, had they dared to; it was a stranger to them. Lovers and friends had left her, and there she was alone, with her sins and her God. With a mine of gold she could not purchase an *hour* of that time of which she had squandered years. A daguerreotype of those years was now before her, pictured with startling accuracy, the contemplation of which filled her with the keenest remorse. She would not have looked upon it, but could not turn away. Gathering the strength a few moments of life had left, and that which the terrors of death imposed, she threw herself from the bed and stared with fearful wildness about the room. "I must not die *now*," she gasped, clenching her trembling hands in a frantic manner—"I cannot,—I *will not.*" The last words were uttered with a painful effort,—the hands fell—the eyes became fixed—horror sat upon the face—and falling forward heavily to the floor, she was "that lifeless thing the living fear"—a *corpse.*

A short time elapsed; the door of that room opened, and an old woman entered, whom we shall recognise as her whom we have before seen in company with the body snatchers. She had lost none of her former ugliness and seemed to regard without emotion the body of the girl. "Dead at last" she muttered, "dead at last—well she has been no profit to me this month past—better dead than alive. I dare say her body will bring more now than before. Doctors would scarcely have her though, if they knew how she died." She then lifted the corpse in her arms, and after passing several doors, and through a dark passage, found herself in the apartment to which we have before alluded, and opening the large chest, threw in the body of the prostitute.

A few hours after this proceeding the body snatchers returned bearing the body they had just raised at C——— and of which we have already given the details. This was the body Cecil saw and recognized as that of her seducer.

Great was the vexation of the Resurrection Men when they saw the condition of the corpse, and marked the ravages of that revolting and disgusting disease upon its frightful features. As hardened as they were in their trade they were shocked at the spectacle before them.

"To-night's work is thrown away" said Thick, moodily.

"No physician would touch this," responded his comrade, "not one, and of course we shall be paid as *many* are,—have our labor for our pains."

"What shall we do with the carcass of this virtuous young fellow who lived like a man and died like a christian, hoping for a resurrection."

"He was evidently a hopeful youth," replied Gaunt with a shrug, and a peculiar twinkle of the mouth, "respected by his friends: who erected as a grateful tribute to his memory, and his many virtues, those costly stones! what a wonderful age we live in! We can throw this carrion into the stream. That would be the easiest method of disposing of it I can think of."

"So it would; but hark! a new idea has this moment occured to me. The subject we sold to Levator was to be carried to him tomorrow night, you recollect. What I propose is this,—that we palm off this one upon him instead of the other, as we can readily find a sale for a recent subject like *that.* What say you old fellow?"

"That is a very luminous idea, and nobody else in the world would have thought of it. Let us act upon it."

The next night the body last raised was carried to Levator, who paid them the stipulated sum without examining the subject, and therefore without any

suspicion of the trick that had been played upon him.

The ensuing evening found Dr. Frene and his student at the dissecting room, ready to proceed with the dissection of the new 'subject.' Towards Levator their manner was changed, and they seemed to treat him with more respect than on a former occasion, and were very careful not to allude to the fair "subject," of a few evenings before, which his scruples had prevented them from mutilating. Levator also observed the same silence in relation to the affair. He had procured another body, and they doubtless felt that they were about to be indemnified for the loss they had then sustained, at least this was the reason formed by Levator for their silence. — Every thing was prepared as before, the wax to inject the vessels—the instruments, etc. etc. Arranging the lamps so as to throw the light full upon the body, Dr. Frene took up his scalpel to commence. He drew the white cloth from the corpse, and then with an expression of horror and disgust receded from the table. What a spectacle met their gaze—a horribly diseased body far advanced in decomposition—a noseless and almost fleshless face—naked cheek bones—grinning and half lipless teeth,—but we go no farther, we will draw a curtain over the dreadful picture, and not shock the reader by the disgusting details, for not all the pens in the world could convey an adequate idea of the unsightliness of that libertine's corpse.

The excitement of Eugene was the most observable, for in that body he also recognized all that remained of the seducer of the girl then his mistress. With a groan he rushed from the room leaving his companions astonished at his sudden disappearance. The sight inspired him with terror and remorse.

Levator looked first at the body, then at the Doctor, who seemed to be waiting for an explanation for what he saw. — There was a silence, and the Doctor looked again at the student, and that glance said explain" as plainly as it could. The explanation was soon given.

"A mean trick they have played you Levator."

"Aye, they have indeed. But what can be the reason of Eugene's sudden exit, and his frustrated manner?"

"I am as much in the dark as yourself on that point" replied the doctor.—Perhaps he was so shocked at the sight of the corpse that he found it impossible to stay."

"Very likely you are right.—You will oblige me by staying here while I seek out the "Kennel" of the body snatchers, to learn the meaning of this."

"Dare you visit them at this time of night, alone and unarmed? Is it not dangerous to put yourself into the power of those cut-throat-looking villains?"

"Do I *dare!* Did you ever know me to shrink from any thing I undertook to accomplish?"

"Pardon, Levator, I know you are not a *coward.* You mistake my meaning. I fear you may be incurring too much risk by visiting those *feeders upon the dead* at this hour."

"Be assured I hazard little by the visit—besides I will carry these ——" he continued taking a brace of pistols from a drawer, which will most effectually frighten them should I require their aid."

"Saying this and leaving the doctor with the 'subject,' he sought the street in the direction of the body snatchers.—Without difficulty he found his way to the place, for he had recently been there several times on business which the reader may readily comprehend. He tapped gently at the door as he was in the habit of doing, but received no answer, nor heard any movement within. Again and again he knocked with the same unsatis-

factory results. Putting his shoulder to the dilapidated door, and exerting considerable force against it, it yielded a little to the pressure. He perceived all was silent within as before. Again he applied his body to the door and pushed with all his strength; it opened sufficiently to admit his body.

The room was totally dark, and appeared without an occupant save himself. He groped his way cautiously about the apartment, thinking that those he was in search of might possibly be sleeping in some part of it, but his search was fruitless. He discovered nothing but the blocks of wood which were used for chairs, and an old bench. Taking some matches from his pocket he succeeded in striking a light. The place appeared the same in all respects as when he had last visited it, and it only required the presence of the body snatchers to render it completely so. He now moved towards the door which cummunicated with the "dead-room," as it was termed by the resurrectionists. Observing all possible caution he lifted the latch and entered. The air was thick and close, and a nauseating effluvium saluted his nostrils, and he almost involuntarily drew back to get his breath. Looking carefully about to see that no one was present, he advanced to the extreme end of the apartment. The chest was before him which was used for the temporary reception of the dead, until they were otherwise disposed of. The nerves of Levator were strong and steady, and he was accustomed to sights of terror, but we should not be a faithful biographer if we did not say that he could not, as bold and well disciplined as was his mind, repress a shudder as he stood there alone beside that chest, the contents of which he was not at a loss to suppose. He carried his hand to the lid with the intention of opening it, but to his disappointment it was locked. "I will not be thus baffled" he said internally, at the same time observing a large bowie knife upon the floor, the blade of which was broken off at about half its length. Thrusting this between the cover and the lock, with some little exertion he forced it open. The stench that met him when he lifted the lid was insupportable, but mastering his repugnance he held up the light and gazed into the chest.

A nauseating sight was that before him. Two human bodies in an entire state of nudity, and which had the appearance of having been long dead.—One was the body of a stout man in a tolerable state of preservation, the other was a female, fearfully emaciated, in an advanced state of putrefaction, bearing marks upon her lips and mouth which were open, indicating the disease of which she died. She had evidently died more recently than the former, but the peculiar virulence of the disease had hastened the progress of decomposition. Levator scanned her features closely, but they seemed scarcely human, so thin were they, and such an expression of dread was depicted upon them. At length he recognized the face, and recollected having seen her several times on '*the pave*' and once in a state of intoxication he had saved her from abuse, and and seen her safely lodged in the hands of the watch, where no doubt a night's sound sleep in the lock-up carried off her debauch. Sickened at the contemplation of death in its worst and most revolting phases, he closed the box and continued his scrutiny in other parts of the room.

Carrying the smokey lamp close to the walls, he searched for another passage from the apartment but without success. No door save the one by which he entered could be found, yet the idea was firmly fixed on his mind, that there was some *secret* passage which communicated with other parts of the house, and which he

doubted not could he once penetrate would reveal many dark secrets.—He felt an assurance within that there were deeds of mystery and crime committed in the old dwelling in which he found himself, and of which all but the actors themselves were ignorant. These convictions had occurred to him before, but never had they fastened themselves so deeply upon him as now. Again he made the circumference of the room, inspecting every crevice, and fissure in the wall more closely than before.

CHAPTER VI.

A Discovery.

He was about abandoning the search as hopeless when he was struck with the peculiar appearance of what resembled in some respects a sliding pannel. After considerable exertion he succeeded to his great joy in effecting an entry. — He now found himself in a long narrow passage which le l he knew not whither. Pulling up the wick of the lamp, to enable him to see better, with soft tread he moved onward. His further progress was soon arrested by a door at the extreme end of the passage-way. It was not fastened. Opening it he found himself at the foot of a stair-case. Mounting to the top of the stairs, he paused, and conjectured he heard voices below. Turning to his right he proceeded in the direction of the sounds until he stood by another flight of steps which he resolved to descend, as he saw no signs of life in the chambers through which he had been traversing. From the bottom of the stairs he had gone a few steps when he heard sounds in a room near him. Puting his ear to the wall he heard suppressed weeping. It was a female he felt well assured, and his curiosity was excited to the utmost to learn more. He had remained in the attitude of listening but a few moments when he heard approaching footsteps. What could he do to escape detection. He saw no place where he might secrete himself, and to stay where he was, he knew to be the most ready way of bringing about that which he feared. But a short time was allowed him to decide upon what course to pursue, for the sounds of moving feet were now more distinct, and he saw the

glimmer of a light which was carried by the person approaching. He moved quickly, but softly, in an opposite direction, when fortunately his attention was arrested by a door standing ajar. It was on the same side of the passage as that which he had just left. He looked in: it was vacant. Entering, he closed and secured the door as best he could, and extinguished the light. Meanwhile the person from whose approach he had fled, stopped at the door he had just left, and in a cracked, angry voice demanded an entrance. Seating himself upon the floor, as near the partition which separated him from the individuals in the next room as possible, he heard the following conversation.

"Have you reflected on what I proposed to you to-day and yesterday," said the same unmusical voice which had so unceremoniously and peremptorily demanded admission, and which he knew to be that of a female somewhat advanced in years.

"Yes, I have," replied a subdued soft voice.

'Well: what is your decision? You have concluded of course like a reasonable girl to meet him here when convenient, or when it suits his wishes."

"On the contrary, I will not receive him at all. I told you so then, and so I tell you now."

"Won't receive him," screamed the old hag in a paroxism of rage. "Who are you talking to; do you know, you jilt! You *will* not! ha! but *I* say you *shall*."

"I tell you, woman," replied the girl, "that I never will accede to his proposals; so importune me no further on this subject, for you only waste words. You know that I receive the visits of only *one* person, and that I have always refused to see any one else, that fearful man much less. He is a savage, a monster. I would sooner share my couch with an Indian fresh from his native forest. You know my antipathy to him. I wish to hear no more on that hateful subject."

Here the anger of the old woman knew no bounds, and seizing the girl by the arm, she shook her violently.

"Impudent hussy—a very fine way you have of doing as you please—very nice words you make use of; I will teach you Miss, that you, are under my control while here. You won't admit him to your room, will you! won't indeed!

"Let me go, woman—release me—you have no authorty over me like this."

"You lie, jilt! I have as long as you remain in my house, and you will not leave it soon, madam, I assure you, so you may content yourself to submit to my will as soon as may be; do you hear, vixen?"

During this harangue she still retained her grasp on the arm of the girl, who groaned under the pain of the infliction.

"This is too much," she sobbed, wrenching her arm with a sudden effort from the hag. "I cannot submit to this usage; desist woman! desist! or I will call for help."

"Call for help and I will not leave the breath of life in your dainty little body," shrieked the virago, preparing to renew the attack.

"Do not harm me, I warn you," cried Cecil—it was she, "lay violent hands on me at your peril; and you shall repent with tears of blood."

"What do you mean by that, *beautiful* and *chaste* young lady," retorted the elder female, laughing in such a fiendish manner as made even Levator shudder. "A very conscientious and exemplary prostitute you are indeed. I can deal with you though."

"Do not strike me," said Cecil, still

retreating. "I have warned you once, and I warn you again, do me no violence. I can reveal what would make you look through iron grates all your days. Do you hear me?"

"What can you *reveal*," replied the virago, in a voice which she meant should be indicative of indifference, but which truly manifested much alarm, "What secrets have you that can work me any harm?"

"Enough to imprison you for life—ninety-nine years—if not sufficient to hang you by the neck, and I am not quite certain that the latter would not be the case."

"Speak, ungrateful wretch," (in a loud voice,) "tell me or I will strike you to the floor," (lifting her clenched hand menacingly,) "what is the secret? Speak quickly."

"What I have told you."

"You have told me nothing, hussy," shrieked the hag, impatiently.

"To convince you that I can do what I have affirmed a few words will suffice, and you may now listen to those few words." Holding up her finger mysteriously and menacingly to her tormentor, she said distinctly these words—"*The body snatchers. Alice Conway. The vial!*"

The effect these words had upon the virago was magical. Her hand fell powerless by her side, and for a moment she stood speechless, gazing at Cecil with an air of dread and deepest hatred. Then in a low and subdued voice she asked, "how knew you of this? What evil demon sent you here to work my destruction! Yes, you have said truly you know enough if disclosed to the ears of Justice to cause me to look through the iron grates of a prison for life. But this does not intimidate me. You cannot escape from my control should you wish to. Or if you should, the evidence of a prostitute would avail but little in a court of Justice. But you may be well assured that I shall take the best of measures to secure your *silence* on that subject."

There was a peculiar meaning conveyed in the last sentence, by the significant manner of the hag, that made the young girl turn pale, and stirred up an indefinable emotion of dread.

"You must see that man of whom I have spoken, to-morrow evening," continued the virago, in a firm resolute tone. "Do you hear me, Miss."

"I shall never! I would die sooner."

"Take that for your insolence." Striking Cecil a blow which prostrated her to the floor, she left the room, locking the door after her.

When Levator could no longer hear the sound of her retreating footsteps he relighted his lamp, and unfastening the door he proceeded to that of Cecil's apartment. Rapping gently he awaited the result. He heard the tread of a light foot, and soon the sound of a soft voice enquiring who knocked.

"A friend," replied Levator, mildly.

"Not Eugene."

"No: that is not my name. I have just overheard a conversation between yourself and another person, and have come to offer you my assistance. You now know the object of my visit. Can I serve you?"

"No—yes—stop a moment. If I could see your face I could tell better whether to trust you or not. Your voice falls kindly on my ears.—I think you can do me a favor."

"Look through the key-hole and you can see my face." Here Levator held up the lamp in such a manner as to throw a light full upon him, while a pair of bright eyes looked out through the key-hole. "Do I look like a corsair or a high-way man, young woman."

"Not at all, I like the looks of you. You resemble Eugene. I will trust a

person with such a face. But you see I cannot let you in. The door is locked on the outside, and I have no key."

"I will force it open if you wish me to?"

"No; don't do that."

"I fancied you might wish to escape from your imprisonment, for it seems like this to me."

"I do wish it, but there are other means of doing so, which I think would be better, beside I know of no where else to go."

"Then you do not wish for my assistance," replied the student, in a somewhat disappointed tone.

"You are mistaken, Sir; it is through your agency that I hope to obtain my object."

"How can I serve you?"

"I wish you to see Eugene. Do you know Eugene?"

"I am acquainted with several persons of that name."

"The one I mean is handsome, not quite so pale as you."

"Ah! young woman, how shall I know him by that description, replied the student, smiling at the *naivete* of Cecil.

"He is a medical student."

"I left him not an hour ago, or rather he left me."

"Eugene —— !"

"Yes, the very same."

"Are you much acquainted with him?"

"Yes; he is my intimate friend, and lives in ——— Street, No. ——.

"'Tis the same, how fortunate. You must visit him if you would do me an act of kindness. Inform him of all you have seen and heard to-night. Beg of him to come to me immediately. If he cannot enter by any other means, he must by force. I believe I hazard my life by tarrying here."

I fear you do, unfortunate girl. Did you receive much injury from the rough usage of the old woman?"

"My face is a little swolen from the effects of the blow, and my arm aches, yet, nothing very serious I believe."

"I have now a favor to ask?"

"What is it?" asked Cecil quickly, and with trepidation in her manner. "Nothing that I shall be obliged to deny you, I hope."

"I trust not young woman. It is this; you have seen my face, and now I wish to look a moment upon yours."

"Oh! is that all," said she laughing. "I can grant it in a minute. Stop until I pull up the wick of the lamp that you may see better. I think you can now have a tolerably fair view of my face through the key hole."

The student quickly obeyed the directions of Cecil, and thought he had never gazed upon handsomer features, but once, and then in that instance the features were those of the dead.

"You are very pretty."

"I am glad my looks please you. I don't think I am handsome, though perhaps I am good looking enough."

"Believe me, you are handsome. What is your name, if I may be allowed to ask?"

"Cecil."

"Ah! yes, I remember. I have heard Eugene speak of you. Cecil, that was the name. Have you anything further to communicate?"

"Nothing in particular, I believe. Tell him, if you please, not to delay."

"Had I not better attempt your release *now*—myself, Cecil? I can easily force the door, and we can make good our escape from this den at once."

"You would—believe me—make too much noise. There may be persons within hearing that would come to disturb our exit, against whose number you may be unable to contend, although you were armed."

"I am armed, Cecil, but fear nothing. Give me the slightest intimation that you wish me to make the attempt, and I will burst the door open."

"No; you must not. What you propose I am persuaded is quite impracticable. You cannot struggle successfully with such odds as the slightest alarm would bring against you."

"I acquiesce in your decision. I believe you are right. It would perhaps be a risk to attempt it, beside I hardly know how to find my way out of this labyrinth myself."

"You will not forget my perilous situation, sir, I hope," said Cecil in a mournful voice, as she heard Levator preparing to depart.

"Forget you, Cecil. It is impossible. Your safety shall be my only care until it is effected. I will not fail to do as you wish. Farewell, Cecil, I go to Eugene."

CHAPTER VII.

An Appeal to Arms.

Without much difficulty, Levator found his way back to the "dead-room." He had scarcely entered and closed the sliding panel, when he heard voices in the passage he had just left. The persons were coming directly towards him, as he judged by the distinctness with which he heard the sounds. His first care was to extinguish the light. To escape by the way he had entered was impossible, as there were two doors to open, one of which was fastened. He retreated to the remotest corner of the room, and coiled himself in as small a space as possible at the end of the box or chest before mentioned. In that situation he considered discovery almost certain; but there was no other alternative, and he resolved to await the issue with as much unconcern as possible, though he *did* regard it as an unpleasant thing to be caught in the character of an eves-dropper, even where he *was*, and among *such* beings as he should have to deal with.

But little time was given him to reflect on the dilemma in which his curiosity had placed him. The panel was thrown open, and Thick and the woman whom he had so nearly encountered, entered. The former made his appearance first, followed by the latter, who carried a small taper. Here a circumstance, fortunate for the student, occurred. The dress of the virago caught, while thrusting her body through the passage; and in her efforts to disengage it, she dropped the light which was instantly extinguished by the fall. It was immediately recovered by Thick, who

attempted to re-light it; but the oil was spilled, and the wick gone, consequently he failed to do so.

"Follow me to the other room, and I will find my lamp," said Thick.

Groping his way into the other apartment, he commenced searching for the lamp, which much to his annoyance he was unable to find.

"Well, no matter, we can do without it. Sit down and tell me the result of your last interview," said the body-snatcher, dragging a block to his friend for that purpose.

"She still refuses to receive any visits, does she?"

"That she does in good earnest. She said moreover, that you were a savage, a monster, or even worse."

"Why did you not frighten her into obedience," cried Thick, angrily.

"Frighten her, I could not. I made the attempt. It only increased her obstinacy."

"Curse her obstinacy. I can find a way to subdue her."

"Nothing but violence can make her submit—the hussy."

"She shall, whether she will or not, I swear it!"

"She by some means has come in possession of our secret, and she threatens to disclose, if we urge her submission to your wishes. What do you think of that?"

"D—n her! how did she learn?" cried Thick, losing all patience. "How unfortunate, the vixen will expose us if an opportunity offers."

"An opportunity must *not* offer," repeated the woman in a serious tone. "Do you understand?"

"Ha! yes; you are right. She must be secured."

"It is a very easy matter to do that. We have her completely in our power, and she has no friends in the city. None except the young man, Eugene."

"Yes, 'tis Eugene alone, that I shall fear. He loves her, and would raise all h—ll to find her, especially if he had the least suspicion that all was not as it should be."

"We must deceive him."

"He will visit her to-morrow night, and she will tell him what has passed. Perhaps she has already told him of our doings."

"What then do you propose," said the body-snatcher, "to do with her?"

"Tell him she is sick, and don't wish to see him."

"Well, say on. What then?"

"We will then compel her to write a letter to Eugene, stating that she has gone into the country for her health."

"Good, very good," replied Thick, but do you think we can do this?"

"We can try the experiment, at least."

"If it should fail—what then?"

"Then it *will*," responded the virago, laying great stress on the last word.

"Yes, but what will be the result?"

"That we shall be detected, arrested, go to prison, &c."

"The devil we shall—you take it very coolly. You may go to prison if you wish, I shall not. We must try some other plan if that fails. I think that would be better than going into the service of the State. However, I believe your scheme is a good one, and we will try it."

"I have some business to attend to now, and we will talk over the affair further to-morrow."

Saying this, the worthy couple went away as they came, leaving Levator alone, and thankful for the accident that prevented his detection, as well as for what he had heard.

Darting from his hiding-place with as much speed as the darkness of the room would allow, he made his way to the street. There he waited until he was

certain of the return of Thick, then knocked loudly upon the door he had just closed after him. He then pushed it open, and entering, stood in the presence of the body-snatcher, who looked somewhat disconcerted.

"Ah! is it you, Dr. Glad to see you," said the resurrection man, resolving to put as good a face upon the matter as possible. "A pleasant evening. Be seated."

"I have come to see you in relation to that 'subject.' There appears to be some mistake about the matter."

"Mistake—eh—indeed," replied the body-snatcher, stammering. "I think there could be no mistake."

"I agree with you perfectly in that respect," replied Levator. "It was evidently not a mistake, but a scheme deliberately formed."

"What do you mean, Sir?" cried Thick, affecting the greatest astonishment. "Do you mean to say—"

"Hear me," said Levator, sternly, resolved to cut short the interview. "You have played a trick upon me; it will be of no avail to deny it—you have brought me a rotten carcass, instead of that for which I bargained. Now what I wish, rascal, is this, for you to take it away, and bring the other to my office without delay.

"I can't understand you—really."

"This evasion which you attempt, is not of the slighest weight. Get the body, and come with me," continued the student, firmly.

"We carried you the body as we agreed. What more do you wish?" replied Thick, moodily.

"It is a falsehood—as great a one as you ever coined. Get the body, and come with me, or I will expose your trade."

"I carried it to your room," continued the villain stoutly. "That fulfilled my part of the contract."

"The body for which I paid you is in this house."

"I protest that it is not."

"You utter a lie," retorted Levator, fearlessly. "I tell you it is not three yards from where we stand."

"You give me the lie—be careful, young man, I am not to be frightened by a boy. The body is not in this house, and I have not the slightest knowledge of where it is."

"Come with me, and I will prove you a liar," continued the student, advancing towards the door.

"You cannot enter *this* room," said Thick, placing himself directly in the door.

"I *must*." (In a determined voice.)

"You *cannot*."

"I *can* and *will*—stand aside."

"Young man, be warned, keep away. It will not be safe for you to come nearer." And he lifted his clenched hand in a menancing manner over Levator.

The former recoiled a step, and suddenly taking a pistol from his pocket, cocked and presented it to the breast of the body-snatcher. With the other hand he deliberately drew his watch from his vest, and then in a calm, stern voice said,

"I give you just one minute to take your unsightly body from that door; if at the expiration of that time, you have not done so, I swear by him who sees us, that I will shoot you."

Had his dead father risen up before him in "propria persona," the amazement of the resurrection man could not have been greater. To see that pale, thoughtful student at once transformed into a hero—almost a desperado—standing before him, with unflinching front, compressed lip, and flashing eye, holding an implement of death to his breast, was what he was not prepared for.

"Half a minute has elapsed, you have

only half a minute more to live, if you stand where you are. Do you remember any of the prayers your mother taught you ? It would be well for you to repeat them, if you do."

The cheek of the ruffian turned pale, and with a half uttered curse he left the passage, and retreated to the "dead-room," whither he was followed by the student, who proceeded directly to the chest, and opening it, pointed to the "subject," for which he had paid the body-snatchers.

"Have I not fulfilled my promise ? Have I not proved you a liar ?"

"Well, suppose you have," growled Thick. "What then ?"

"I will tell you. You must take this body and carry it to my office."

"*Must*, did you say?" said the body-snatcher, contemptuously.

"That is the word. You heard me aright. You *must* carry it."

"I will not."

"Look at me, Thick, and see if I appear in earnest ; then hear what I have to say. There are now two dead bodies in that box. If in the course of five minutes you do not do what I have bid you, there shall be three there ; and the third shall be yours."

Saying this, he again looked at his repeater, "It now wants five minutes of nine."

The body-snatcher regarded for a short time the face of the student with the greatest interest ; then moodily taking the sack, which hung against the wall, proceeded in a sullen manner to put in the body. Having done this, he signified that he was ready, and followed by the student, left the house. They took their way to the dissecting room in silence, avoiding as much as possible those in the street. The walk was soon accomplished, and the exchange effected to the gatification of Levator, and the great relief of Dr. Frene, whose patience was completely exhausted by the long absence of the former. Darting a furious look at Levator, the body-snatcher lifted the corpse of the young female upon his shoulder, and left the dissecting room.

The former then gave the Dr. the particulars of his evening's adventure, not forgetting Cecil, and the critical situation in which she was placed. The Dr. was much surprised at these revelations ; and admired the courage which the student displayed in effecting an exchange of subjects.

He was of the opinion that Eugene should be immediately informed of what he had heard, that he might take such measures as he thought proper for the liberation of his mistress. Accordingly Levator again leaving the Dr. to await his return, started in pursuit of his friend Eugene. He proceeded at once to his residence ; but on enquiring, to his regret, found he was not at home.

The student was now at a loss to determine what he should do ; but at last the idea occurred to him that he might be at Dr. G.'s, a particular friend of his, where he spent many of his evenings, who lived at the North End, on ——— street, not far from Commercial street. It is now near the hour of ten, and the streets were almost deserted. A clerk, or a laborer could be seen occasionally on his way from business to his home. No females were seen unattended, save "nymphs of the pave." The latter needed no protectors, as they trusted in their own prowess, in all cases of emergency ; and doubtless they did not overrate their powers. Several of these "ladies" passed and repassed him, each vieing with the others in their efforts to attract his attention ; but finding their arts in vain, they started—unquestionably—in pursuit of more impressible subjects.

"Ah ! he is insensible," said a frail one, with a contemptuous curl of the lip, "quite stupid—let us leave him."

"He cannot, and what is worse, and still more likely, he does not wish to understand us."

"See," she continued, eagerly pointing her finger toward the object specified, "See, that tall, lean clerk yonder, who looks as though he was never made to bend his body from a right angle with the pavement, and is so daintily twirling his ivory-headed cane in his gloved fingers, I consider him as already caught."

"Indeed," replied another fair, and no less innocent one, "do you know him ?"

"Know him ! What a question. Do I know my alphabet? Do I know you? Do I know the seventh commandment?"

"Why, I have seen that clerk there, at almost every assignation house in the

city He is the most combustible piece of counter furniture—and by furniture I mean clerks—in all Clerkdom."

"The merest smile ever formed upon a pair of pretty lips, will make him throw down his pen, and transform him at once into a fashionable gallant. His vanity is nauseating, and equalled only by his want of sense. Do you observe how erect is his head? 'Tis the lightest and most unsubstantial part of him, and you see," she continued, "it is fast seeking a medium of its own density, or rather rarity. 'Tis a perfect vacuum; it is almost a miracle why it has not collapsed by the pressure of air on the outside. Invert him, and the next instant he will fly back to his present position, without effort. But I lose time; let me make the attack at once, and carry him by storm. Now see how quickly I will capture him."

Saying this in an under tone to her companion, she darted off in pursuit of the tall clerk, while the student, with some considerable curiosity, watched her movements. She was soon at his elbow, and touching him lightly with the tip of her finger, giving him one of her most affective smiles, wished him a good evening.

The effect was electrical. He made a full stop—actually carried his hand to his hat and attempted to bow, which brought the trunk in an angle of forty-five degrees with the inferior extremities. It was altogether farcical. He smiled, too, in the French style—he would not smile in English—that tall clerk—and then assuming the air, gentlemanly offered, his arm to his shrewd enamorata.

But she was not satisfied with this, she wished her companion to know for a certainty that she had triumphed, and accordingly signified her desire to go in an opposite direction, which he instantly consenting to, she returned leading, or being led by his clerkship.

Giving a sly wink at them as she passed, they were soon lost in the winding of the street; the former, probably, forgetting that there was such things as ink and paper, or a master or a counter. Charming abstraction from the cares of life!

CHAPTER VIII.

In which are several Dilemmas.

Levator was now near the termination of Salem Street, and the residence of Dr. G. He was passing Sheafe Street when he heard a voice which sounded familiar. He instinctively paused, thinking it might possibly be the person of whom he was in search. Looking up the street from whence the sound proceeded, he saw through the surrounding gloom the outlines os two persons, who appeared to be engaged in low and earnest conversation. Approaching as near as he dared, for fear of being seen, he put himself once more in the attitude of a listener. He could scarcely restrain an exclamation of surprise when he recognized Thick as one of the parties. He felt an irresistable desire to hear the subject of their conversation. Protected from observation by the shadow of the houses upon either side, he moved within earshot of the parties. What was his surprise to hear his own name mentioned, and his curiosity was excited still more when he learned that the other individual was a constable. "The body," said Thick, glancing cautiously about him, "is now on M —— Street. I discovered it there to-day in the manner first related. If you go there immediately you can surprise him in his horrid work. He is at this moment unconcious of danger, making the dissection. But you must remember the conditions on which I make these statements. Do not for your life let him know that I betrayed the secret."

"Rest assured that your name shall not be mentioned in connection with the affair," replied the constable.

"How long since they discovered that the body was missing," enquired the resurrection man.

"Yesterday; some marks which the villains left about the grave excited suspicion, and upon opening it they learned that they were well founded."

"The relations of the deceased have offered a reward for the detection of the offender, and you are entitled to one half of it for the information you have communicated. Crimes of this kind are becoming so frequent, that the law must be put in full force in order to suppress the evil."

"You are quite right," responded Thick, piously. "I hope justice will overtake the offenders, and deal with them as they deserve. Hanging would be too good for them. They should be burnt at the stake. 'Tis a foul business; this stealing out at midnight with spades, dark lanterns, &c., plundering innocent church-yards—digging up men, women and children without distinction of age, sex or condition, and without regard to the feelings or antipathies of the dead. I am shocked at the bare idea of it. I hope, sir, as an enforcer of order, peace, good morals, and the law, you will use your best exertions to bring the criminals to justice. I have a perfect horror of all such depredations."

"I am glad to hear such sentiments," replied the small branch of justice, with dignity, drawing himself up, "and I doubt not but that your wish will be speedily accomplished. No. — M—— Street, you say is where I shall find the ruffians."

"Yes, up three flights of stairs."

Levator stopped to hear no more, but leaving his hiding place as expeditiously as possible, made his way back to the dissecting room.

"What is to be done," cried Dr. Frene, after hearing what had passed between Thick and the constable.

"I hardly know, to tell you the truth," replied the student thoughtfully, "we might resist the officer and keep him out if he should come immediately and without proper authority to search the premises."

"That would be of no service. He would soon return with a sufficient posse to effect his object. It would be better to secrete the body so as to leave no traces of what we have been doing."

"Right, Dr. Take the subject and follow me. I will carry these dirty instruments," said the student, seizing hastily the light, while the Dr. took the corpse in his arms and prepared to follow, apparently as little concerned as if he were going to bed.

"This way—down these stairs—and these—along through this chamber—and so down that flight of steps which brings us to the basement story," said Levator, hurriedly, moving along at a rapid rate.

"Not so fast, my young friend," said the Dr., laughing. "This dead gentleman is quite heavy, and unused to such haste. Beside, it is, I assure you, very uncivil to show your guests through the house in such a cavilier sort of a way."

The Dr.'s foot was on the second step of the last flight of stairs, when, unfortunately losing his balance, he was precipitated with a startling crash to the bottom, changing positions several times in the course of his descent with the corpse, the latter being alternately beneath and above him. But this was not the extent of the disaster.

The stair terminated near the cellar door, which Levator had just opened for the purpose of descending, when the Dr. lost his equilibrium. He heard with alarm, and yet with a strong inclination to laugh, that gentleman's downward, rapid flight. What could he do to avoid actual contact, and the fearful concussion of the vast body falling like a comet towards, and threatening to demolish him. To retreat was to hasten the catastrophe; consequently, his only chance was to proceed; but alas! for human calculations he had hardly placed his foot on the first step, when, what he feared came upon him—that is, the Dr. and the dead man—the latter seeming to take as active a part, and as lively an interest in the proceeding as the former.

The effect of this unwished for recontre must be obvious. The student was hurled by the shock from a perpendicular,—and with a very uncomfortable and unceremonious celerity, made his way into the cellar. Here, then, was a dilemma. The Dr. and the corpse lying upon very amicable terms at the foot of one flight of steps, and the student, with his instruments, in the same predicament at the bottom of the next

flight which terminated in the cellar. The light was extinguishee by the fall, and they were in perfect darkness. Neither of the parties escaped unhurt, except the corpse, which, upon examination, had not sustained the slightest injury. Despite the aches and bruises, they laughed heartily at their ludicrous mishap.

"Are you much hurt," enquired the student of the Dr. in a voice hoarse with laughter, stretching his arms about in every direction for the lamp.

"Not seriously. But I am pained to say that the subject is stark dead," groaned the Dr., with difficulty restraining his risibles sufficiently to enable him to speak, and without attempting to move.

"How did you happen to fall ?"

"In the most natural manner in the world. Being incumbered with our mutual friend, and endeavoring to keep pace with you, I lost my footing." Is there anything very remarkable in that? Pray how did you fall," continued the man of physic, in a significant tone.

"Because I could do nothing else. Ah! I have found the lamp. How fortunate. I have matches in my pocket; you are *both* laughing, are you ?"

"No ; *I* laugh, and the dead gentleman *grins*. He takes things with more composure than either of us. An impurturbable fellow this. Nothing excitable in his composition, although he came down stairs as quick as I did; yet I must confess, in justice to him, that I did my best."

"No doubt of it," said Levator, laconically, rubbing alternately his knees, elbow and head.

The lamp was now relighted. With considerable ado the student mounted the stairs to see what plight the Dr. was in, as well as the subject. He found them stretched out at length, close together, apparently on the most friendly and equitable terms. No serious damage was done, and gathering himself up, the Dr. again took charge of his burden, and with some little difficulty, on account of his bruises, bore it to the cellar, followed by the student, who sagely concluded in this instance that it would be more prudent to follow than to lead.

Proceeding to one corner of the cellar Levator removed a large flat stone, which exposed to view a drain. Into this, the Dr. thrust the body. Putting the slab in its former position, they ascended again to the dissecting room, satisfied that the subject was properly secreted.

The table on which it recently lay, was instantly loaded with books, while every vestage of their recent employment was carefully obliterated. Having done this, and renewing the fire in the grate, with each a book, they seated themselves and awaited the result.

Presently the tread of several feet was heard upon the stairs, and the constable, followed by two other persons, entered the room.

The Dr. and Levator affected the greatest surprise at this intrusion.

"Gentlemen," said the former, "to what do we owe the honor of this visit."

"I learn," said the constable, with a dignity becoming a judge, "that you have in your possession a dead body, which you most sacriligiously dragged from its place of sepulture. I have come," said he, pompously, "as an enforcer, and representative of justice, to recover the dishonored remains, and arrest you. Men, seize the ruffians."

"Listen," said the Dr., sternly, "you are oversteping the bounds of your authority. You are taking for granted, what remains to be proved. You must find the body, and then it is theirs in whose possession you find it to show how and where they procured it."

"I know my duty, sir," said the magistrate in a severe and consequential tone. "You are my prisoners. Resistance will be useless. Where are the handcuffs ?" he continued in a solemn manner, turning authoratatively to his companions. "Seize the sacrilegious monsters."

The part the self-important magistrate was acting with such impurturbable gravity, was too ludicrous to be regarded with calmness, and both the Dr. and the student laughed without restraint.

This put the enforcer of the law in a towering passion. So he swore by the authority invested in him, that such temerity and insolence should not go go unpunished. It was a flagrant setting at defiance of the law, whose minister he had the honor to be. Laughing in such a presence was equivalent to "contempt of court," and should be punished the same as that grave offence. He was shocked at such an exhibition

of recklessness, and want of defference. It was truly surprising as well as lamentable; but what better could they expect from men who would go forth at the lone hour of midnight, and unearth the unoffending dead for the sake of the savage and unnatural pleasure of cutting them in pieces. Nothing; it was of a piece with their other crimes.

When the man of justice had delivered himself,—which he did at length without aid—of this powerful harangue, he drew about him all his terrors, and looked sternly, and almost *annihilutingly* at the two individuals "charged with high misdemeanors against the state." But when he expected that they would have quailed beneath the severity of his eye, or fallen down before him, what was his horror to find that it only increased their merriment.

"These are hardened wretches. I perceive we shall be obliged to resort to more cogent means."

"If you have proper authority," said the Dr., "you can search the premises, and if you discover the object of your search, you can attend to your duty as a magistrate afterward. This is the legal mode of procedure."

"As I said before, sir, I am well versed in what concerns *my* duty," replied the magistrate, imperiously, "and I shall discharge it at *all* hazards. As a civil officer I call on you to submit to my authority; if you do this, you will, I assure you, be the gainer by it."

Approaching the Dr., and laying his hand upon his shoulder, he said, in an authoritative tone, "You are my prisoner. I arrest you in behalf of the state, as being guilty of most flagrant and unnatural crimes. Men," he continued, beckoning his companions to approach, "I command you in the name of the State to seize and iron these miscreants."

The good natured Doctor could bear it no longer, and seizing the self-sufficient constable by the nape of the neck with a vigor which that worthy functionary vainly attempted to resist, he pushed him along before him to the open door, then applying his foot energetically to his most assailable parts, he sent him off, not in a tangent, but in a half circle, to the bottom of the stairs. Then turning to the assistants who were looking at the operation, in silent astonishment, he said, "If you want to search the premises you are at liberty to do so."

But they did not seem disposed to avail themselves of this privilege, but hastened to the assistance of their fallen leader, who was groaning lustily, and breathing out threatenings against the audacious wretch who had dared to do him violence.

He would "return on the morrow with sufficient force to make certain his capture, and then he should receive summary punishment for his defiance of the laws." He would have made the attempt even then, but his attendants refused, as they did not consider themselves able to effect any thing; and they doubted his power to proceed to such an extremity. Accordingly after a short search, they left the house, mortified and swelling with rage.

Locking the door of the dissecting room, the Doctor and Levator went to their homes.

We will now return, and follow the fortunes of Eugene. After leaving the dissecting room, as before mentioned, for more than an hour he walked the streets, reflecting on what he had just witnessed. It had touched a delicate spot in his conscience. He had seen the carcase of the betrayer of his mistress horribly disfigured by a loathsome and disgraceful disease. It naturally caused him to think of his own course of life, and what might possibly be its results if he persisted as he had begun. It was easy to foresee what they might be, and the shocking idea made him shudder. He loved Cecil; and the fate of her seducer seemed a warning to him, and pointed significantly to what might be his own destiny.

Tired at length of wandering without any object, he turned his footsteps towards the residence of Cecil. It was near ten o'clock when he reached the house where lived his mistress. Knocking at the door he requested admission to the room. With sorrow he heard from the old woman that she was sick, and not in a condition to see him at present. Although he insisted upon it, she assured him he could not have access to her until the morrow.

With a sad and heavy heart he left the house, and sought his own home. Plunged in deep thought, it was a late

hour before he was wrapt in the forgetfulness of sleep. Then he dreamed of the dissecting room, of grinning corpses, with which the idea of Cecil was strangely blended. He saw again with awful distinctness that same disease-stricken body, upon which he had so recently gazed; and to his disordered fancy it seemed that the lifeless mouth opened, and spoke to him in a warning voice, bidding him to shun the evil which had wrought his own destruction; and then with a mournful look and tone, pointed to the form of Cecil, who formed part of the group; while from the lidless eyes, hot scalding tears fell over the half fleshless cheeks, scorching it to blackness in their descent.

Suddenly he seemed to stand by an open grave, and the same gastly finger was directed ominously towards it, regarding him the while with a gloomy and half-reproving, half-sorrowful expression. How much did the dreamer read in that steady, solemn gaze of warning, of anguish, of self-condemnation, and unavailing repentance. But that night with its visions and dreams of terror passed, and the sun looked into his room as brightly as though his rest had been undisturbed by the phantoms that attend remorse, and hover over the pathway of sin.

It was a late hour when he finished his toilet, and a light breakfast. Being solicitous for the health of Cecil, his first care was to visit the "granite front" to see, or make such enquiries as should inform him of her condition.

On the way he did not forget to procure those little delicacies which the sick are generally allowed to eat with impunity. What was his amazement, as well as chagrin, when he was told by the old virago with the grey hairs, that she whom he sought had gone into the country to stay until her health should be reinstated.

"Did she leave me a note?"

"No; she left nothing."

"Not any thing!"

"No; she would be more likely to take something, than to do that."

"'Tis a falsehood, woman—a vile one; she would take nothing that was not rightfully hers," replied Eugene, redening with anger at the hag's insinuation. "Did she not tell you what was her place of destination. Think a moment—don't hurry—take time, you may have forgotten."

"No; I repeat what I have said; she gave me not the slightest information as to where she was going, or her intentions in regard to you, but packed up her clothes—what few she had—in the greatest hurry, apparently, and was out of the house before I was hardly aware of her intentions; although I *did* ask her what I should tell you, and where you could find her. To these inquiries she only replied that it need not concern me, the hussy. There was a small sum due me on her board, as well as the rent of the room; and she had the best in the house, as well as extra fuel."

"Here is some money, woman. Say no more of that. Learn, if you can, where she is, and I will reward you for your trouble. Hear me; never insinuate in my presence that Cecil is guilty of theft," continued Eugene, sternly, "she would not purloin the slightest article, especially from such a person as yourself."

He had turned from the door and walked several yards, when a new idea suggested itself to his mind. Suddenly returning he again confronted the hag, saying, in a deep and threatening voice, "Woman,—if one like you deserve the title of woman—if you are deceiving me you shall have cause to repent it, and curse the hour when you told me a falsehood. If she suffer wrong through your agency, beware!" He then left the house.

At this time Levator was in bed, stiff and sore from the injuries he had sustained by his fall, and scarcely able to leave it. But reflecting on the situation of Cecil, with much difficulty he arose. Taking a hasty breakfast he again went in search of Eugene. But the fates seemed resolved to thwart his designs. It was with unfeigned sorrow that he heard the student had within the hour left for a ride in the country. He was perplexed and uncertain what course to pursue. He was unable, alone, to effect the release of Cecil, provided he was in his usual health and spirits; much less in his present condition. "I will visit and advise with Dr. Frene," he exclaimed, as he turned his steps in the direction of his residence.

While on the way he fell into a

curious train of thinking, and regarded often with a saddened gaze, the ring he had taken from the white finger of the fair subject. Upon inspection he had found the letter M. engraved upon the inside. He indulged in many idle speculations as to what name the initial was intended for. How often had such thoughts rushed through his mind since that night when he first looked upon that beautiful corpse. How often had he gazed upon it in dreams, and been tempted to press his lips to the placid brow.

At times he started at what he deemed his own folly, not to say impiety, in suffering his mind to dwell with such a strange and undefinable feeling upon it. He was horrified when the idea forced itself with irresistible power upon him, that he was in love with a corpse ! !

Fain would he have smothered such thoughts at their very birth, but he lacked the ability to do so. He believed such feelings were unnatural, and at periods regarded himself as little better than a monomaniac. He felt anxious to know if the body-snatchers had discharged faithfully their part, and returned the body to the earth; but knew not how he could obtain that knowledge. He felt certain that they had not ; more especially when he reflected on the deception they had recently practised upon him.

CHAPTER IX.

Marietta—The Chase.

At this crisis of our tale, had you crossed the beautiful Mystic, turned ——— street, and so continued on until you come to No. —, you would,—or as the phrase goes—might have seen on the second story of an elegant wooden house, at one of the front windows, with the venitian blinds, a young female of angelic loveliness, who was apparently recovering from long sickness.

A mild saddened expression sat upon her fair, pale cheek, upon which, though the remorseless hand of disease had been laid, was not the less attractive, but on the contrary, it had lent a greater charm to her features. She turned her large soul-illuminated eyes upon the radiant sun, and its beams seemed to enlighten some dark spot in her heart. The blood mounted with a richer, warmer glow to her cheek—her chest heaved with a new energy, while bright, clear drops, started from beneath the "fringed lids." They were not the messengers of grief—those tears—but joy, deep, heartfelt, overflowing joy. Her head was now thrown back, and her hair streaming loosely upon her shoulders, her beautifully expressive eyes raised to heaven, while her hands were clasped in the attitude of prayer. Her lips moved, and she spoke with eloquent fervor of a "wonderful preservation" of an "almost miraculous interposition of Providence," and a "salvation from a worse than death, and for this wonderful manifestation of God's mercy, she thanked and extolled His preserving goodness." This done, she leaned upon the window-case, and was lost in meditation, while her eyes seemed to be fastened as by a spell on a ring which was on the middle finger of her left hand.

"Lady, why dost thou gaze thus upon that sparkling bauble—what charmed interest rivets on it thy attention? Dost thou know, lady ? Or can'st thou not analize thy own heart. Was it the gift of a lover ? or is there some secret mystery connected with that ring.—Speak ! dreamer, speak ! Yes, there was a mystery, a strange unacountable secret connected with that ring, which she could not unravel, though she strove to do so.

She drew it for the hundredth time from her tiny finger, and held it up to the light, and turned it "o'er and o'er," many times, yet she was not satisfied, but apparently was as much perplexed as before.

Upon the inside of that ring were the letters M. L., on which the gaze of the

young lady was fixed long, and thoughtfully. At this moment she was interrupted by the entrance of a dark eyed girl, who bounded lightly to her side, and in a tender manner commenced playing with her long tresses, while thus in a soft voice she addressed her, "Oh ! how thankful I am that you have been thus miraculously restored to our arms, even after we had laid you sorrowfully and bitterly in the grave,—looked our last, as we believed, upon that beautiful face—heard the earth thrown with that hollow, horrible sound upon you. I thought my poor heart would break then, Marietta. It throbbed so violently, and such a desolate feeling crept over me—such an indescribable sensation of utter loneliness. Oh ! Marietta, I can hardly believe that I am waking, or that I am really looking at you. It is only when I am encircling you thus, that I can credit my senses."

"Dear Ada, my feelings are not unlike yours. It requires an effort,—a great effort, for me to convince myself that I am not the victim of some horrible delusion. Can it be ? I sometimes say to myself, can it be that I am indeed living, and with my friends ? It seems more like a dream, the illusion of which will soon vanish."

"How fortunate that your parents were absent, and did not receive the news of your supposed death."

"I am thankful that they were spared the grief such tidings would have caused them. I shall soon be able to return to that home, which came so near being made desolate by my living inhumation."

The young lady whom we have introduced as Ada, now proceeded to dress a small wound upon the neck of her companion, which had the appearance of being made with some sharp instrument, by a single downward stroke.

We now return to Cecil. After the conversation with Levator, she awaited in the momentary expectation of her lover's appearance. Hour after hour passed, still he came not. How tardily the time passed away, and how heavily it hung upon her hands. Still she counted impatiently each moment that dragged itself wearily along. She heard with saddened heart the clock tell the hour of ten, eleven, and then twelve. She had abandoned the idea that Eugene would make his appearance.

Throwing herself upon her couch, she fell into a troubled sleep, in which she lived o'er again the last few months of her life. But in every scene that passed before her vision she saw the lifeless, ghastly remains of her seducer, as on the night of its exhumation by the body-snatchers.

The remembrance of that revolting sight had never been absent from her thoughts a moment, and in her dreams it came back with terrible distinctness. Often, in an agony of fear, had she sprung from her bed, while a cold perspiration forced itself from every pore of her body.

She had slept perhaps an hour when she was aroused from its restless embrace—such a state was not rest—by what sounded to her like a key turning cautiously in the door. With a vague apprehension of danger she sprang from her couch, and placed herself in such a manner that when the door opened, it would swing towards her.

The bolt was thrown back with as little noise as possible, and it was carefully opened, while a person advanced softly in the direction of the bed, which she had just left. He carried no light, but by that which was admitted by the door she had no difficulty in recognizing the uncouth, misshapen form of Thick, the body-snatcher.

Every limb of the poor girl trembled with extreme fear. There was no human being in the world whose presence she dreaded so much, and whom she held in such utter abhorrence as the man before her. She had never looked upon him without a shudder, or thought of him without fear, more especially since she had learned the secret of his horrid trade, and seen the corpse of her false lover in his possession. She had also good reason to suppose that to all his other crimes he had had added that of murder.

Alice Conway occupied the apartment adjoining hers, and although she had been the victim of a disgusting disease which would ultimately have proved the means of her death, she felt almost certain she might have lived several months had she not been in the hands of Thick, and his accomplice—the virago. She had seen her about as usual the

very day of her death, and had no suspicion of the approaching catastrophe. She had entered the room the morning ensuing her last meeting with Eugene, and found it without an occupant, while the clothes, tattered and torn, were scattered about the room in the greatest confusion. Her amazement was turned to fear when she saw that the few articles of dress belonging to the wretched girl were all as they had been thrown off the previous night, and a ring which had been given her by her destroyer, whose mistress she had once been, was lying on the floor.

A horrible suspicion crossed her mind, nor was it lessened by the discovery of an empty vial, which emitted a strong acid odor. She returned pale with fright to her room, and soon learned from the hag that Alice was dead. This circumstance increased the fear she had always entertained for the body snatcher, and she associated with him every thing that was base and wicked.

It was not singular, then, that a sensation of terror greater than she had ever before experienced, shook her frame, and blanched her cheeks, while her heart throbbed as though it were about to leap through the walls of its narrow prison. Thick stepped towards her bed, and she fancied she heard his hurried breathing, as panting with expectation he listened to learn if his victim was yet aware of his approach. Again he lifted carefully his foot, and placed a greater distance between himself and the door, which, in his eagerness to make sure of his prize, he had forgotten to close or secure, as his natural shrewdness would have dictated in calmer moments.

That was a fearful moment to Cecil, whose limbs were scarcely able to support her, and who could with difficulty refrain from shrieking with fright. She knew that he would soon discover that the bed was without an occupant, and immediately search every corner of the room to find her, as he had good reason to suppose that she had not escaped. Another step was made, and the body-snatcher, with the hellish fires of brutal lust burning in his bosom, imagined himself so much nearer the consumation of his wishes. Cecil hears, as with trembling eagerness he draws his hot breath through his fixed teeth. He felt sure that the desired object was in his power, and he should soon clasp her in his arms—possess her; and it stirred up that wild tumult in his breast which his savage nature was susceptible of feeling

The victim stood still, afraid to move, as the least noise would reveal her hiding place, and yet she knew, to remain where she was, would ensure the consequence which she feared. She resolved many times to emerge quietly and stealthily from behind the door, and flee, but her limbs refused to obey, and half fainting, she maintained her position. He reached the bed, and Cecil heard the wild beatings of his heart as he stood for an instant preparing to reach forth his arms, throw himself upon the bed, and then make sure of his victim. Ah! he finds he is baffled when he thought the very moment of possession had arrived. With an imprecation too dreadful to repeat, he was about to turn from the bed, when gathering the remains of her strength and energy, Cecil darts like a spectre from the apartment.

As quick and noiseless as is that movement, he observes it, and showering curses upon her for her cunning, with fiendish eagerness starts in pursuit, guided only by the light, and almost inaudible footsteps of her who flies like a frightened deer at his approach.

But whither shall she go, or where escape? She knows not, she cares not, if she elude only the monster upon her track, scenting her steps as a fierce bloodhound, in sight of his prey.

Quicker than the wind she flies through many rooms, entries, and dark passages, guided only by an instinct imparted by fear. Now she ascends swiftly a flight of steps, while a short distance behind, she hears the heavy, hasty tread of Thick, who, in a hoarse voice, bids her desist.

But he still feels certain of his prey, and confident that she cannot ascend much father, and can find no means of egress. She is at the top of the stairs, and again darts onward through the thick darkness, like one endowed with supernatural power, and upheld by another's strength.

With a surprising skill, and celerity she throws open doors, springs through forsaken chambers, whose floors shake beneath the light pressure of her feet—

through many windings, and mazes, and again mounts a crumbling stair-case. She is considerably in advance of her pursuer, who in vain taxes every faculty to attain his object. Many of the boards over which he hastens bend fearfully beneath his weight, and threaten to precipitate him to the story below, but he heeds not the danger, thinks only of the *one* hellish passion that is consuming him, and its gratification.

The stairs shake and creak beneath his heavy tramp, although they scarcely gave any indications of the zephyr-like movements of Cecil.

Onward still they fly, the pursuer and the pursued, through passages long untroden, deserted and decayed.—Another flight of steps is mounted She is on the third story, and still hears behind her the footsteps of her persecutor, but he advances with more caution, as if fearful that the floor will yield beneath him. And now she hears his voice calling more frantically than ever upon her to stop, for death lay before her if she proceed. One that she dreaded more than death, was behind, and she heeded not the warning.

"In God's name go no father," shrieked Thick, "or you fall to the first floor. Cecil! *Cecil!* hear me," continued the body snatcher, mounting with more care than heretofore, the third flight of stairs. "You are rushing to certain death, stop mad woman, I warn you of the danger."

Thick was right; there *was* danger before her, although he cared little for her safety, yet feared that his prey might escape by the hand of death, before she had satisfied his brutal desire. She is upon the fourth flight of steps—they totter beneath her weight, but she presses onward, and gains the top in safety. She now believed she had gained a place of comparative safety, believing that her pursuer would not dare to trust himself upon the decaying stairs, and she pauses a moment to rest. He stands at the foot of the steps, listening to hear what direction she has taken. He heard nothing, and stung to madness resolved to ascend. Cecil hears him place his foot upon the first step, then the second, and so upward, and with throbbing heart, she momentarily expects the frail fabric with a crash, will give way beneath him. Horror, he has ascended nearly to the top, and she turns to flee, fearful that he may gain her hiding-place in safety; but in a moment she hears a crash, that told her that the steps had fallen. But where was her pursuer? He had caught with his powerful hands the floor upon each side, and with an extraordinary exibition of strength, drawn himself safely to the fourth story. Tired with the unwonted exertion, he paused to rest, while Cecil continues her flight.

"Stop Cecil, stop," again cried Thick, in tones of fear, "advance to yonder room and you are dashed to pieces. I will not harm you—for God's sake hear me—will you rush to certain destruction?

That part of the basement story over which they now stood, had been formerly used as a ware-house; and the others over it, for places of storage, the heavier articles being raised from the lower story, by means of a windlass through an opening in the several floors.

CHAPTER X.

Cecil was now within a few paces of the apperture; hence the warning of the body snatcher. To fall from that height would be to meet a horrible death. What now should she do! Her persecutor was advancing towards her. Her resolution was soon taken. By the feeble light admitted through the fissures, and crevices of the old walls, she could just discern the chasm before her, and stepping as near it as her safety would allow, she said in a resolute voice: "Advance another step and I throw myself off, and am dashed to pieces."

Her pursuer halted, fearful that she might put her threat in execution, then moved carefully towards his victim.

"Another step, and I take the fearful leap," continued Cecil, inclining her body towards the chasm, and placing her feet in attitude of springing from the dangerous position. Again the body snatcher paused, with his whole frame trembling with rage and disappointment. "Curse you" he muttered through his fixed teeth, "Curse your ingenuity. But you shall be mine yet.

Her eyes becoming more accustomed to the darkness, and gazing intently about, to her joy she beheld another flight of steps, passing directly over the opening, into the attic. It was evident that they were not built there in the first instance, but had been placed there recently.

"I will risk all upon that treacherous fabric," said Cecil to herself, "and he will not dare follow."

In another moment, she was upon the decaying structure, ascending fearlessly to the top, unmindful of the shouts and entreaties of Thick to desist, who expected to see it yield beneath her, causing her destruction. But her feet seemed scarcely to touch the rotten boards. In an instant more he beheld her at the top in safety, while a cry of astonishment, and incensed anger arose coupled with an oath, to her ears. For the present, at least, she considered herself safe; for she believed that he had not sufficient temerity to induce him to attempt to follow. She was mistaken. Being so many times baffled, had stimulated him to greater exertion, and deprived him of discretion. Uttering shocking blasphemies, he begins the ascent. Cecil in her turn, warns him of the danger, and rashness of the attempt. Her words fell upon deaf ears. He is half to the top, the crumbling steps are tottering under him, and with terror, he hears the rotten wood yielding. Ah! now he discovers his error, but to retreat is as hazardous, or more so, than to proceed. Half frozen with horror, he continues to ascend, the treacherous fabric still settling beneath him, threatening the next instant, to plunge him into the yawning chasm below, breaking in the descent every bone in his body. That was a terrible moment to the wretched man—an age of suspense and terror. He has accomplished two thirds of the distance, and is reaching forth his hands to grasp the floor above, when with a startling crush, the structure upon which he has trusted himself falls, and Cecil hears it with fearful distinctness whirling through the several appertures, and striking with a still louder crash at the bottom.

But where was her pursuer. He had caught as before, by his hands, and was now clinging with all the energy of despair, to his slight uncertain support. He held only by his fingers, and with a frightful desperation, he put forth his strength to lift his body to a place of safety. He could not do that, though his strength were doubled. His powers are fast failing. His fingers cannot much longer retain their hold, and see! the blood starts from under his nails, in his efforts to raise himself. He entreats Cecil to assist him in the most abject manner.

"Stretch forth your hand and save me. I swear by heaven—I will not harm you. An instant more, and I shall be dashed in pieces—horrible—I shall not be in the shape of a human being—a mass of bruised trembling flesh. In the name of God help me. I am not fit to die Cecil—I *cannot* die,—for there are

many black sins weighing upon me. Will you not save me? I am a murderer —I cannot appear in the presence of God with all my crimes upon me. As *you* hope for mercy save *me*.

"I would save you," shrieked Cecil, but I cannot –it will be only to hasten my own death. I have not the strength to save you, if I would. Pray, miserable man—pray for that mercy which I cannot give,—and which I dare not ask. There may yet be hope for you in the next world, but there is none for you here.

"I cannot pray, I never prayed," groaned Thick despairingly, "and if I could, think you it would avail me. Oh *no—no—!*" he shrieked, "I feel more like cursing my ill luck, than praying. But I am falling—give me your hand, for the sake of Christ."

"And you will not harm me," cried Cecil touched with pity.

"I swear it by the great God."

Approaching as near as she dares, she reaches out one hand, while with the other, she grasps firmly the end of a projecting board. With difficulty, the body snatcher relinquished his slight hold upon the floor, and took the small hand of Cecil. She put forth all her strength, and Thick now fast raising himself to a place of security, and imagining himself safe, exclaimed in a triumphant voice, "*now you cannot escape me.*"

With a sudden effort she wrested her hand from the grasp of the miscreant. For an instant he clung with one hand to the floor.

"Pray," said Cecil, "for your time is short."

"Curse you" gasped the body snatcher, and then she heard a shriek, and in a moment a dull shock away many feet below her. She shuddered, and covered her face with her hands, as though to shut out some terrible sight, and then creeping cautiously to the edge of the apperture, and straining her vision to its utmost, she beheld a dark shapless mass, without a pulse of life. * * * * *

About ten o'clock the succeeding morning, the body of the resurrectionist was found, but it was as unlike the remains of a human being, as it well could be. There was a pool of blood, and something resembling the hair of an animal, with a crushed heap of flesh, and bones. When the shadows of night, dark and gloomy, had fallen upon the earth, Gaunt took those mangled, shapless remains, and the body of the man he had assisted in "raising" at C. and by the assistance of the old virago, placed them in the boat; then throwing in several large stones, he pushed silently from the shore. When he had gained the middle of the stream, he lay down his oars, and fastening to each of the bodies a large stone, threw them over the side; being borne down by the weight, they sank quickly, disturbing the smooth surface of the water, only by a few light surges which soon settled away, and left it calm as before the remains of the two human bodies had disappeared beneath. Resuming his oars, he rowed to the shore, from whence he came. The virago awaited him in the dead-room.

"You must go another voyage, Gaunt; this carcase has a terrible odour, no physician would put a scalpel to it," she said, pointing to the corpse of Alice Conway; "besides," continued she in a whisper, "there is poison in it—Nitric Acid enough to kill ten persons. How rapidly it decays, the stench is horrible. Perhaps you'll have to make another trip on the Mystic to-night, she added mysteriously, and with a grim smile, but it is not impossible, that some better way may offer."

Again Gaunt launched his frail bark, and rowed into the stream as before. He had attached a weight to the emaciated body of Alice, and was about to precipitate it into the water, when a dark looking object arose to the surface. It was the body of the man, which he had thrown in a little while before. Having become disengaged from the stone, it had arisen. "Ah! this is fortunate," said Gaunt brutally, "I will give you a grave together. You are old friends, and it is a pity to part you, even in death. Here is your Alice, Mr. Libertine, reach us your hand old fellow." Saying this, he lashed them firmly together, those diseased—wasted—ghastly bodies, and adding heavier weights, they sank together.

Having returned from his second voyage, he proceeded with the virago to set fire to several parts of the house, then stepping into the boat, suffered themselves to float down the stream. The hiding place of Cecil had been dis-

covered, and the fire was kindled evidently for her destruction.

Through the long hours of that day, had she hoped for succour through the agency of Levator and Eugene; but in vain. No one came to her aid, and to leave her prison, was impossible without assistance.

The loneliness and silence of her situation were favorable to reflection, and not without a salutary influence upon the erring girl. She thought long and deeply of what she *had* been, and then of what she was. She wept, the betrayed and sinful one wept tears of heart-felt repentance. The work of reformation had commenced. With deep humiliation she confessed to Him who was best acquainted with her frailties, soliciting mercy and pardon. It was now dark, and she shuddered when she thought of passing the night where she then was. It was eight o'clock. Weary with watching, and exhausted for want of food, she was endeavoring to sleep, when the strong, suffocating fumes of smoke reached her, and caused her to start with terror. A horrible suspicion crossed her mind—they had fired the building for the purpose of destroying her. Then she strove to banish the idea as being too diabolical in its nature to be true. Meanwhile the smoke kept increasing, and rolling up in large black masses, filled the wretched attic, and threatened ere long to suffocate her. The house was on fire, she could no longer doubt, and she shrieked loudly, frantically for assistance. But who was there to hear her cries? No one, no mortal ear. They only arose with startling clearness to the slated roof of that old dwelling, and then settled down, awaking a thousand echoes, not one of which could avail her. Thicker, heavier the dark volumes of smoke came curling upward, accompanied by an ominous crackling sound, the import of which could not be mistaken. The air grew hot and oppressive; it was with difficulty she could breathe it. Believing her time had come, and escape beyond human possibility, she abandoned herself to her fate, while the low, crackling noise she had heard, increased to a roaring, rushing sound, and she saw the flames darting up, communicating with fearful rapidity from room to room, chamber to chamber, and spreading in all directions. Suffocated and blinded as she was, she could no longer remain in one position, but ran shrieking about the narrow limits of her prison like a maniac. To respire much longer without fresh air was impossible, and in a distracted manner she searched to find some rent or seam in the tiling over her head, through which she might inhale a draught of fresh air. To her joy she is successful, and putting her mouth to it she breathes more freely. The flames mounted to the roof, and she now heard the destructive element over her head, while the excessive heat caused her frequently to change her position, and shrink into the smallest possible space. How horrible must be the emotions of that person, who hemmed in by the flames upon all sides, with no hope of escape, awaits her doom—a death of exquisite torture. We can hardly conceive of a situation more awful, and so wholly fraught with agonizing suspense and keen living horror. A human being we verily believe, could not by any ingenious, hellish device, be placed in a more fearful condition. The roar of cannon would be music to the roaring of the malicious element; and the rush of armed thousands to mortal combat mere pastime to the lightning rush of the approaching flames. Cecil's strength was fast failing, and fear and torture were doing their work upon her. The roof was now one liquid sheet of fire, darting along the rafters, thrusting its forked tongues through every fissure, licking up every thing that was combustible in its passage. The burning timbers with the fabric they supported would soon fall, and offering up an audible, fervent prayer, she prepared to die. At that dreadful moment, she fancied she heard a voice calling loudly her name. With a glimmering of hope she listened. Again she heard it, and this time distinctly it pronounced her name. 'Twas Eugene, he was in the next chamber below. Rushing to the aperture where the stairs had been, she shrieked for help.

"Thank God, I have found you," exclaimed Eugene. "Here be quick, when I throw you the end of this rope, make it fast, and let yourself down by it to me. In heaven's name be quick, the roof will fall in a moment."

She held the rope in her hand, but she knew not where she might fasten it. There was but one thing to which she could attach it, and that was a burning rafter. There was no alternative; she threw it over the blazing timber, and made it secure by a knot. The next moment she had thrown her weight upon that uncertain support, and was rapidly descending to Eugene. It was a fearful hazard, but there was no other chance of safety. But a short time would elapse before the rope would be burned off, and should it be so before she had made the descent, instant death awaited her. She had made half the distance, when she knew by the vibrating motion that one strand had parted. With a convulsive shudder, she thought of the fall of Thick. She had made two-thirds of the descent, when the same motion of the support to which she clung for life, gave intimation that another strand had burned off, and she was suspended by only one over that chasm.

"Haste Cecil, haste, another moment and you are lost," shouted Eugene in an agony of suspense. "Cecil,—*dear* Cecil, quick, *quick*."

"Eugene," cried a stentorian voice from another room, "save yourself or you perish—the roof totters, for God's sake, Eugene, fly."

"I perish then, or save *her*," he replied with frightful calmness.

Cecil was now within a few feet of Eugene, and being directly over the aperture, he could not reach her.

"Swing yourself towards me,—give the rope a slight movement this way."

She did as he directed. The last strand burned off at that instant, and she fell into the arms of Eugene.

"Saved, thank heaven."

Covered with smoke, with their clothes burned in many places, Dr. Frene and Levator rushed into the chamber.

"*This way*," shouted the Dr., as begrimmed with smoke and ashes, grasping the helve of an axe in his stalwart hand, he sprang towards the wall which separated the tenement they were in from the next beyond, and with the strength of a Hercules, commenced opening a passage. Each well directed blow, shook fearfully the blazing fabric over their heads, and caused hot cinders to fall thickly about them. It was a wild, anxious group—Eugene, Levator, and the half suffocated, fainting Cecil, in the back ground, watching the mighty effects of Dr. Frene, their bosoms swelling with hope or tortured with fear, as his labors were successful or threatened to fail. Through the blinding smoke they could discern the bright gleam of the polished edge of the weapon he wielded with his right hand, as it whirled in quick successive circles about his head, and fell with a crash upon the yielding walls. It was a heavy broad-axe, but in that moment of danger, he wielded it as the merest toy.

"The roof is falling," cried Eugene, folding Cecil to his bosom. "We shall perish together. God forgive us all."

"*Amen*," responded Levator fervently.

"The opening is large enough," shouted the Dr.; "save yourselves."

At that moment a strong grasp was laid upon Eugene, who overcome with heat and smoke was about sinking to the floor, and he felt himself dragged—with Cecil—through a narrow space, and in a place of comparative safety, while a terrible crash behind them announced that the roof had fallen. The part of the building in which they found themselves had suffered but little from the fire. After pausing a moment to recover themselves, they without difficulty found their way into the street, grateful for their wonderful preservation from a horrible death.

When the fire had been subdued, and the crowd had retired, Gaunt and the virago returned, and stole quietly into that part of the dwelling which the fire had left, congratulating themselves upon the success of their plot, and the supposed death of Cecil.

CHAPTER XI.

Retribution.

'Twas a glorious night, and a most living beauty was shining upon the earth, which smiling back its thanks, languidly resigned itself to rest. The world and all that the inquisitive eye could gaze upon was beautiful, and bathed in a flood of mooulight, still retained something of its primal brightness.

"All heaven and earth were still—though not in sleep.
But breathless as we grow when feeling most,
And silent as we stand in thought too deep."

It was ten o'clock, and Marietta and Ada are seated by a window, as we have seen them once before. They are drinking in the mild loveliness of the evening, and its tranquilizing stillness stirs up a delicious rapture in their hearts.

"Ada," said the former, "let us walk abroad and enjoy the beauty of the night. I am now quite well, and can incur no risk by the proceeding. It will do me good."

"With pleasure, Marietta. I was about to make the same proposal; for who can be so stupid as to sleep on such a night."

They were soon ready, and arm in arm sallied forth, taking their way instinctively towards the cemetery. Marietta was silent and thoughtful, and her companion observed that she frequently turned her eyes gratefully to heaven, and that her lips moved as if in prayer.

Stopping frequently to admire the star-gemmed canopy over their heads, considerable time elapsed before they reached the church-yard. Marietta could not repress an involuntary shudder when her eye fell upon the numerous marble slabs and mounds which marked the last resting place of a human being.

And the sight revived most vividly the late dark passage in her life—her burial and strange resurrection. The gate was open and they entered. Reading the inscriptions as they passed onward, they reached the middle of the yard.

"What sound is that?" said Marietta, in a suppressed and slightly tremulous voice, bending forward in the attitude of listening.

"I heard nothing, let us listen."

"Do you not now, Ada?" continued Marietta in a whisper.

"Yes, I *think* I can," replied her companion turning pale.

"Now I hear it distinctly," and again she listened.

"What *can* it be?"

"It resembles the sound produced by throwing up the earth with a spade; and hark!" Marietta added, Ada nervously clinging close to her friend, "I think it must be the body snatchers. They are opening a grave not far from us."

"What shall we do, give the alarm?"

"No, we are not certain that the supposition is correct. Let us make certain of it first. We will proceed softly in the direction from whence the sounds proceed."

"Would it be prudent, Ada?" said Marietta, looking enquiringly at the young girl by her side, whose alarm had entirely subsided, and whose boldness seemed to increase momentarily.

"Certainly! No one will harm us. If they should discover our approach, they would be more frightened than we should be."

With cautious tread the young ladies advanced in the direction of the sounds, they every moment growing more distinct, and by their peculiarity proving that they were right in their conjectures. Suddenly they ceased, and they paused in the hope of hearing them renewed, but in vain.

"Let us move a little this way," said Ada, leading her friend with a gentle force in the direction pointed out.—"They cannot be far from here, and we shall be likely to see before coming too suddenly upon them."

Again they advanced until Marietta declared in a whisper that she would go no farther.

"Let us reach that large grave-stone, just before us, and wait until we hear them recommence operations." They had now arrived at the place designated

by Ada and were leaning against the sculptured slab to rest. They had occupied this position but a few moments when the sounds were renewed, and so very near them that they trembled at their own temerity. "Let us fly," said Marietta, in a voice rendered almost inaudible by fear. "Look here, Marietta, by this stone, and tell me what you observe," said her more courageous companion.

Emerging from behind the stone, Marietta mechanically followed the directions of Ada. Trembling with terror, they beheld a man at work in a grave, throwing out the earth. The spectacle was so unexpected, and recalled so forcibly her recent exhumation, that she could not repress a scream. The body-snatcher alarmed at the sound, dropped his spade, and with fear pictured in his countenance, looked wildly about to discover the source from whence it proceeded.

His eye fell upon Marietta—a deathly paleness overspread his skeleton features, his grey eyes started in their sockets, making his ghostly visage still more hideous—his strength forsook his emaciated limbs, and with a shriek of mortal fear he fell forward into the grave—a *corpse !*

He had recognized Marietta as "the fair subject," and believed that he was beholding the dead. Overcome with extreme terror, and horrified beyond description, with as little life in his body as the earth he had been throwing up, he sank into the grave he had dug with his own hands.

* * * * *

We will now return to the "granite front." A few days preceding these events, the virago, with a strong cord in her hand—with rage and disappointment depicted upon every feature of her grim visage, ascended to the second story of the tenement adjacent to that which she had formerly occupied.—Tying the rope about her neck, and then making it fast to the window-sill, with a wild cry she leaped out. For a few minutes the limbs quivered, and the face was convulsed with pain, after that there was nothing but death written upon those features and represented by that body.

* * *

We now follow the fortunes of our other characters. Eugene married Cecil, thus proving that what had recently passed had not been without a redeeming influence, and making her an "honest woman." He never had cause to regret that he did so. She is now a virtuous and happy wife, which fact we think is not without a *moral*, viz., that it is never too late to reform, and that very few are so hardened in sin that they will not.

The good humored Dr. Frene, is now in the practice of medicine, in one of the more eastern towns in Maine. He has not yet forgotten the adventure in the dissecting room—the fall down stairs, &c., as well as the resuscitation of the young female, nor the constable, whom he so unceremoniously ejected, "while in the discharge of his duty as a magistrate." There are many *amusing* things which we might say of him, had we room, but at some future time, we may give an extended history of what he said, and what he did.

As for Levator, he finished his studies, and graduated at Harvard College. Did our limits permit, we would tell you *how*, he became acquainted with Marietta—and his amazement on first beholding her among the living. Also, how he loved her, and she returned *that* love, with all a woman's devotedness. Another scene, and we close.

Marietta and Levator are in that little room, where we first saw the former.

"Will you *wed* me Marietta?" said Levator in a deep musical tone, gazing anxiously into the beautiful face of the woman he adored.

"On one condition," was the half playful, half serious reply.

"Name it," cried Levator eagerly, "and if it is not harder than woman ever imposed upon mortal man, I swear to comply."

Recover my lost ring, and find the owner of this—" drawing one from her finger,"—and I am *yours.*"

With a smile of superlative happiness upon his thoughtful face, the pale handsome student, knelt at the feet of his beautiful mistress, and drawing the ring from his finger, he had taken from the cold hand of the "fair subject," held it

is already fulfilled."

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